

13th Sunday After Pentecost

September 4, 2022

*Online Bulletin for the
Mark 2:4 Adaptive Worship Service*



1812 North Highland Avenue

Clearwater, Florida 33755

Ministers: The People of Grace Lutheran Church

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Pastor: Rev. Jefferson Cox

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Welcome! Called to contemplate the cost of discipleship, we might be helped by translating Paul's request to Philemon into our prayer of the day: Refresh my heart in Christ. Strengthened by the company and forgiveness of Christ in holy communion and recalling God's grace in remembrance of baptism, we can be strengthened in this hour to "choose life"—to choose life in God as our own.

There are a few things to know about this service: you are not required to stand at any point though you can move around anytime you want or need, prayer slips are available for your prayers to be included in Prayer Time, and Holy Communion is served with gluten-free bread and grape juice.

GATHERING SONG

All Are Welcome

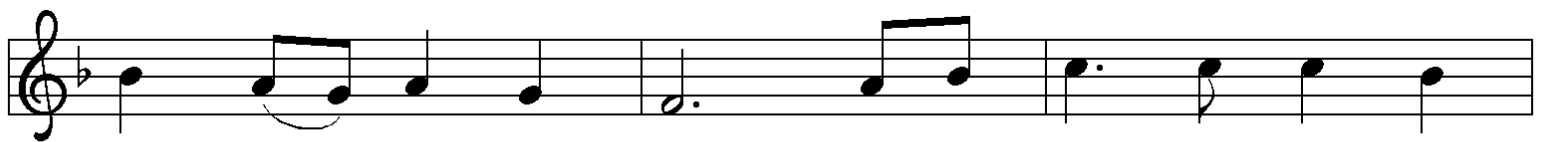
Verses 1 & 2



1 Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safe - ly



live, a place where saints and chil - dren tell how



hearts learn to for - give. Built of hopes and dreams and



vi - sions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the love of



Christ shall end di - vi - sions: All are wel - come,



all are wel - come, all are wel - come in this place.

2 Let us build a house where prophets speak,
and words are strong and true,
where all God's children dare to seek
to dream God's reign anew.

Here the cross shall stand as witness
and as symbol of God's grace;
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: TWO OAKS, Marty Haugen

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GREETING

Worship Leader: 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

Worship Leader: Let us pray. Direct us, O Lord God, in all our doings with your continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name; and finally, by your mercy, bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

FIRST READING

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

Introduction to the Lesson: *Moses speaks to the Israelites, who are about to enter the land promised to their ancestors. In this passage, he lays out the stark choice before them: choose life by loving and obeying the LORD; or choose death by following other gods.*

Reader: 15 “Today I am giving you a choice between good and evil, between life and death. 16 If you obey the commands of the Lord your God,[a] which I give you today, if you love him, obey him, and keep all his laws, then you will prosper and become a nation of many people. The Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are about to occupy. 17 But if you disobey and refuse to listen, and are led away to worship other gods, 18 you will be destroyed—I warn you here and now. You will not live long in that land across the Jordan that you are about to occupy. 19 I am now giving you the choice between life and death, between God's blessing and God's curse, and I call heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Choose life. 20 Love the Lord your God, obey him

and be faithful to him, and then you and your descendants will live long in the land that he promised to give your ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

Reader: The word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL **Luke 14:25-33**

Introduction to the Lesson: *Jesus speaks frankly about the costs of discipleship. Those who follow him should know from the outset that completing the course of discipleship will finally mean renouncing all other allegiances.*

Worship Leader: The Holy Gospel according to Luke in the 14th chapter.

Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.

Worship Leader: 25 Once when large crowds of people were going along with Jesus, he turned and said to them, 26 “Those who come to me cannot be my disciples unless they love me more than they love father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and themselves as well. 27 Those who do not carry their own cross and come after me cannot be my disciples. 28 If one of you is planning to build a tower, you sit down first and figure out what it will cost, to see if you have enough money to finish the job. 29 If you don't, you will not be able to finish the tower after laying the foundation; and all who see what happened will make fun of you. 30 ‘You began to build but can't finish the job!’ they will say. 31 If a king goes out with ten thousand men to fight another king who comes against him with twenty thousand men, he will sit down first and decide if he is strong enough to face that other king. 32 If he isn't, he will send messengers to meet the other king to ask for terms of peace while he is still a long way off. 33 In the same way,” concluded Jesus, “none of you can be my disciple unless you give up everything you have.

After the reading...

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

GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons

The Fine Print of Discipleship

A lot can go wrong in our lives. If you ever have any doubts, just read the fine print in a contract, where every worst-case scenario is spelled out. Sometimes we appreciate having those challenges hidden away. When we are jumping into something new, it may be easier to take the leap if we don't dwell too much on what can go wrong.

But that's not the approach Jesus takes when describing the commitment of discipleship. Instead, he uses big, bold terms to emphasize the struggles and conflicts ahead. Discipleship with him will mean taking up a cross. It will mean confronting our most deeply held commitments—our possessions, re-

relationships, and identities. In fact, the cross at the center of discipleship will be so burdensome that it will seem impossible to shoulder.

Jesus' words might scare us off if we miss the other half of the agreement. He doesn't ask us to carry our cross alone. He will be with us as a partner who has already taken the journey from death to resurrected life. In discipleship, Christ leads us and brings the power of God to meet our challenges. Yes, Christ will call us to share the pain of his cross. He will call us to die to old habits, stuck ways of thinking, and broken relationships. But he will also share with us the victory of his cross and the power to rise to new life.

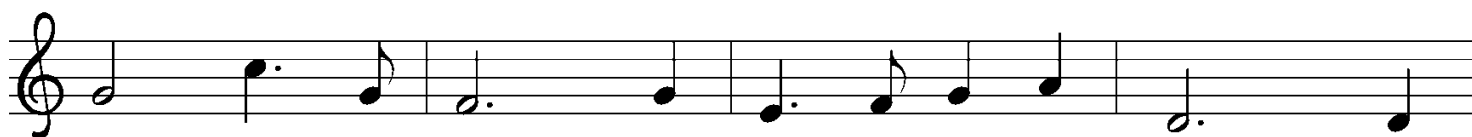
At baptism, we were marked with the cross of Christ forever. That cross marks all of the deaths we will face, but it also marks the beginning of an eternal life with God. Every time we gather in Christian worship, we participate once more in Christ's journey from death to life. Around the table, we gather as Christ's disciples, sharing the overwhelming burden of his cross but also its even more abundant victory. Here, our crosses are transformed by the community in which they are held and by Christ, who leads our way.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Lift High the Cross

vs. 1 & 2



Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim till



all the world a - dore his sa - cred name.



1 Come, Chris - tians, fol - low where our cap - tain trod,
2 All new - born ser - vants of the Cru - ci - fied

Refrain



our king vic - to - rious, Christ, the Son of God.
bear on their brows the seal of him who died.

Text: George W. Kitchin, 1827–1912; rev. Michael R. Newbolt, 1874–1956

Music: CRUCIFER, Sydney H. Nicholson, 1875–1947

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PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Worship Leader: As scattered grains of wheat are gathered together into one bread, so let us gather our prayers for the church, those in need, and all of God's good creation.

A brief silence.

Prayer Leader: We pray for the church around the world and for the mission of the gospel. Refresh the hearts of your people, deepen our understanding of every good thing we share, and strengthen our partnerships in the faith. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: For the nations and those in authority: for the elected leaders of our towns, states, and country, and for international organizations. Grant wisdom to those who govern and raise up citizens who make decisions in the best interest of their neighbors. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: For all in need: for those who suffer from disease, who struggle with homelessness or food insecurity, for those whose family life is difficult, and for all in this community who need your care. We pray especially for all those on our prayer list, those suffering from violence and terror such as the people of Ukraine, Buffalo, Uvalde, & Highland Park, and those suffering from natural disasters such as wildfires, floods, droughts and disease such as COVID-19, and these we name now..... and those we name now with our lips or in our hearts Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: Receive the prayers of your children, merciful God, and hold us forever in your steadfast love; through Jesus Christ, our holy Wisdom.

Congregation: Amen.

OFFERING

Offerings to the mission and ministry of Grace can be made online at GraceCLW.com (look for the "Donate" button), or (for now) by mailing a check to Grace Lutheran Church, 1812 N. Highland Ave. Clearwater FL 33755. Thank you for your continued financial support during these uncertain times. You can fill out your attendance form on our website as well.

OFFERING PRAYER

Prayer Leader: Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Worship Leader: Let us pray. O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray in whichever language is 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.

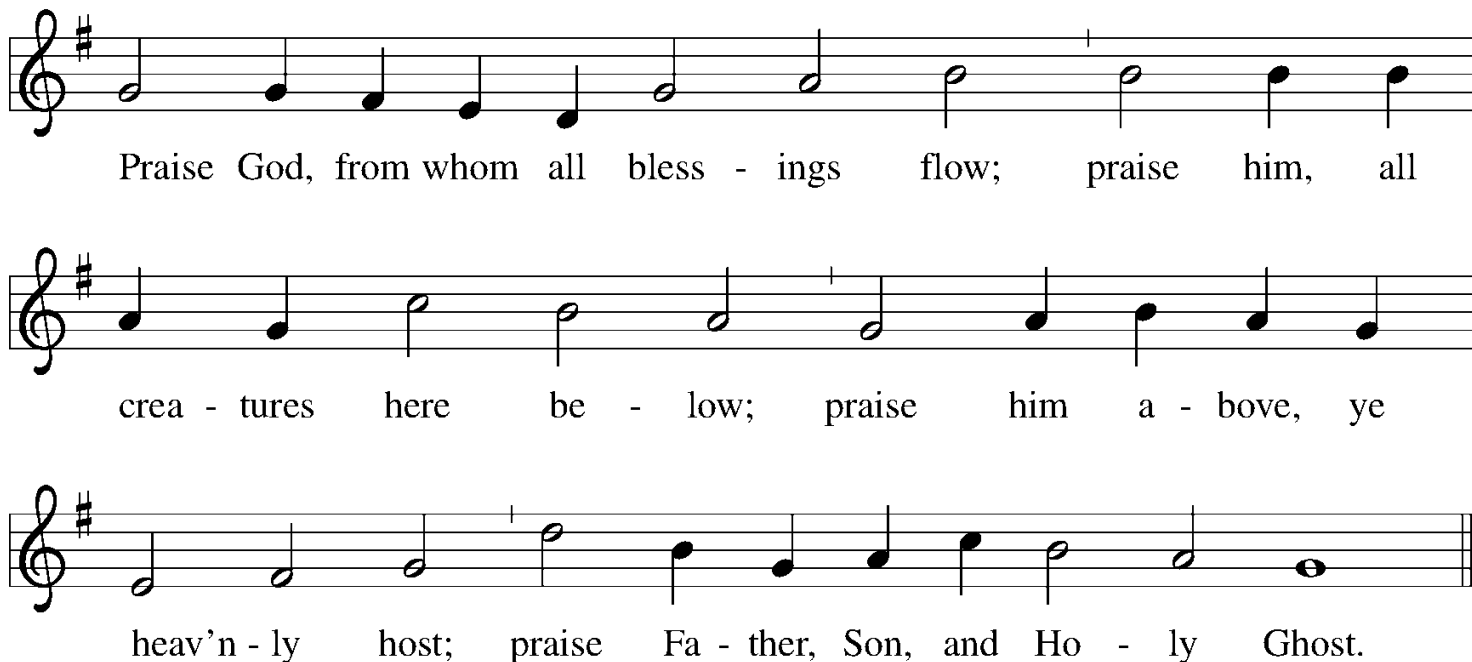
BLESSING

Worship Leader: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

Congregation: Amen.

SENDING SONG

The Doxology



The musical notation consists of three staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The first staff contains the lyrics: "Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all". The second staff contains: "crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye". The third staff contains: "heav' n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost." The music ends with a double bar line.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711

Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Together we have heard God's Word and joined in prayer, we have given and have been forgiven. Now as this service of worship is ending, this week's service to the world is beginning! Go in peace. Tell what God has done.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!