

# Grace Lutheran Church

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Hastings MI 49058



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Pastor Ken Scheck II  
Ms. Cindy Olson, Minister of Music  
September 17, 2023

# Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost

September 17, 2023

**Pentecost** is a season for growing represented by the color green. We celebrate the founding of the church and the fruits of the Spirit, and the continued growth given by our gracious God.

*Holy Silence is observed as we enter to worship.*

## Gathering Music

### Welcome

*Arise in body or Spirit*

## Gathering Song

*If We Live, We Live to the Lord*

ACS 1025

The musical score is written on a single treble clef staff in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It consists of three lines of music. The first line contains the lyrics: "If we live, we live to the Lord. If we". The second line contains: "die, we die to the Lord. So then, wheth-er we live or". The third line contains: "wheth-er we die, we are the Lord's." There are three triplet markings (indicated by a bracket with the number '3') over the notes "wheth-er" in the second line and "wheth-er" in the third line.

## Greeting

*The pastor and the assembly greet each other.*

- ☐ The steadfast love of God, the life of Jesus Christ, and the growth of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- ☑ **And also with you.**

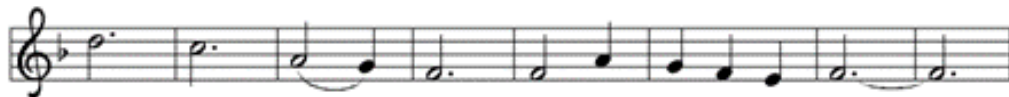
**Refrain**



Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace



to God's peo-ple on earth. Glo-ry to God in the



high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



1 Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al - mighty God and Fa-ther,



we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.

**Refrain**



2 Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God,



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world:

have mer - cy on us; you are seat - ed at the right  
hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.

Refrain on page 3

3 For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord, you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it, in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther.

*Final refrain*

Glo - ry to God in the high - est.  
A - men, a - men.

**Prayer of the Day**

- Ⓐ Let us pray... O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness.
- Ⓑ **Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

## First Reading

Genesis 50:15-21

*After Jacob's death the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.*

📖 A reading from **Genesis**:

<sup>15</sup>Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" <sup>16</sup>So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, <sup>17</sup>'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. <sup>18</sup>Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." <sup>19</sup>But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup>Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. <sup>21</sup>So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

📖 Word of God, word of life.

🙏 Thanks be to God.

## Psalm 103:8-13



📖 Refrain




<sup>8</sup>LORD, you are full of compas- | sion and mercy,  
slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love; 📖  
<sup>9</sup>you will not al- | ways accuse us,  
nor will you keep your an- | ger forever.

<sup>10</sup>You have not dealt with us according | to our sins,  
nor repaid us according to | our iniquities.

<sup>11</sup>**For as the heavens are high a- | bove the earth,  
so great is your steadfast love for | those who fear you.**


<sup>12</sup>As far as the east is | from the west,  
so far have you removed our transgres- | sions from us.

<sup>13</sup>**As a father has compassion | for his children,  
so you have compassion for those who fear | you, O LORD. **

## Second Reading

**Romans 14:1-12**

*This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.*

 A reading from **Romans**:

<sup>1</sup>Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. <sup>2</sup>Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. <sup>3</sup>Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. <sup>4</sup>Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

<sup>5</sup>Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. <sup>6</sup>Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

<sup>7</sup>We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. <sup>8</sup>If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. <sup>9</sup>For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

<sup>10</sup>Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. <sup>11</sup>For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,  
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

<sup>12</sup>So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

 Word of God, word of life.

 **Thanks be to God.**

Arise in body or spirit.

## Gospel Acclamation

TTF Page 50



☒ Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

## Gospel Reading

Matthew 18:21-35

*When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.*

☐ The Holy Gospel according to **Matthew**.

☒ **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>21</sup>Peter came and said to [Jesus], “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

<sup>23</sup>“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. <sup>24</sup>When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; <sup>25</sup>and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. <sup>26</sup>So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ <sup>27</sup>And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. <sup>28</sup>But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ <sup>29</sup>Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ <sup>30</sup>But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. <sup>31</sup>When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. <sup>32</sup>Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup>Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ <sup>34</sup>And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. <sup>35</sup>So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

☐ The Gospel of the Lord.

☒ **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## Children's Time

*All children [including infants] and youth who desire to come forward for the children's sermon are welcomed and encouraged to do so. Parents/caregivers are welcome to accompany their child during the children's message. There may be a time of dance and celebration that is offered.*

## Message

*Silence for reflection. After reflection,  
Arise in body or in spirit to sing the hymn.*

## Hymn of the Day

*Where Charity and Love Prevail*

ELW 359

*You may sit or kneel for prayer.*

## Prayers

*We pray the prayer response after each petition. You will hear, **God of Grace**. The assembly prays, **Receive our prayer**.*

**A** Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

*A brief silence.*

**A** We pray for the church. Bless the missions and ministries of diverse congregations, that they uplift the good news of salvation in ways that can be understood. We lift up *Bishops Elizabeth and Craig, Assistants Chrisy and David, our synod companions Saint John Lutheran Church, Grayling; Harvest Community Church, Lake Odessa; Minister of Music Cindy and Pastor Ken*. God of Grace.

**G** **Receive our prayer.**

**A** We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought and healing to rivers clogged with pollution. Enrich the soil for trees and plants. Protect the crops needed to feed those who hunger. God of Grace.

**G** **Receive our prayer.**

**A** We pray for all who govern. Encourage those in positions of power to lead with empathy, practice forgiveness, and care for those who struggle. Be with those who safeguard the world, including *Parker Stancil (Freedlund), Cody and Myrina Crawford (Clements), Cynthia Rudesill (Hansen), Joel Taggart (Varkula), Julia Ehredt (Schreiner, Halstead), and Seth Domke (Domke)*. God of Grace.

**G** **Receive our prayer.**



**A** We pray for our neighbors who face illness of any kind. For those strained financially; for all living with chronic pain, mental illness, the disease of addiction, or otherwise afraid or in harm's way. Protect all who cry out for mercy *especially Veronica Baarson, Annette Bonogofsky, Chris Bush, Cherie Clements, Andy Cove, Pat and Ray DePew, Bob & Bonnie Ehredt, Mike Gibbons, Lisa Golnek, Henry Heil, Tina Kemper, Norma Ludlow, Martha Mizak, Lisa Nurenberg, Abbie and preemie Charlotte Osborn, Corrina Palmer, Ricky Palmer, Sherry Palmer, Annette Poholski, Kathy Politis, Patty Renne, Jennifer Rohr, Theresa Strefling, Randy Teegardin, Al Throop, and Kay Wagner.* God of Grace.

**C** **Receive our prayer.**

**A** We pray for this congregation. Open our hearts to practice intentional invitation. Help us to forgive each other, practice patience, and choose welcome over judgment. Move us to care for those in our community seeking refuge and safety.

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

**A** We give thanks for the saints who died in faith. Show us how to live faithfully, creatively, and lovingly in your church and world. God of Grace.

**C** **Receive our prayer.**

**P** Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ.

**C** **Amen.**

*Arise in body or spirit.*

**Offering Song**

*Create in Me*

**TFF Page 55**



**C** Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -



new a right spir - it with - in me.



Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take not your

Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -  
store to me the joy of your sal - va - tion, and up -  
hold me with your free Spir - it.  
Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -  
new a right spir - it with - in me.

### Offering Prayer

- A Let us pray . . . Be known to us, O Lord, as you were made known to the disciples.
- Receive these gifts, and the offering of our lives, that we may be your hands and feet in the world.**

### Sharing the Peace of God

- P The peace of Christ be with you.
- And also with you.**  
*(We share the peace of Christ with one another.)*

### Great Thanksgiving

- P The Lord be with you.
- And also with you.**
- P Lift up your hearts.
- We lift them to the Lord.**
- P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

☐ 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:

### Holy, Holy, Holy



Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho-ly Lord, Lord God of pow-er and might,  
 heav-en 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.

### Table Prayer

☐ Holy God, our Bread of life, our Table, and our Food, you created a world in which all might be satisfied by your abundance.

☑ **You dined with Abraham and Sarah, promising them life, and fed your people Israel with manna from heaven. You sent your Son to eat with sinners and to become food for the world.**

☐ 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. For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

☑ **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

- ☐ Remembering, therefore, Christ's life given for us and his rising from the grave, we await his coming again to share with us the everlasting feast.
- ☑ **By your Spirit nurture and sustain us with this meal: strengthen us to serve all in hunger and want.**
- ☐ By this bread and cup make of us the body of your Son.
- ☑ **Through Christ all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever. Amen**

### Lord's Prayer

- ☐ Gathered by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught:
- ☑ **Our Father in heaven, holy 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 the Lord is good.
- ☑ **Thanks be to God.**

*Sit.*

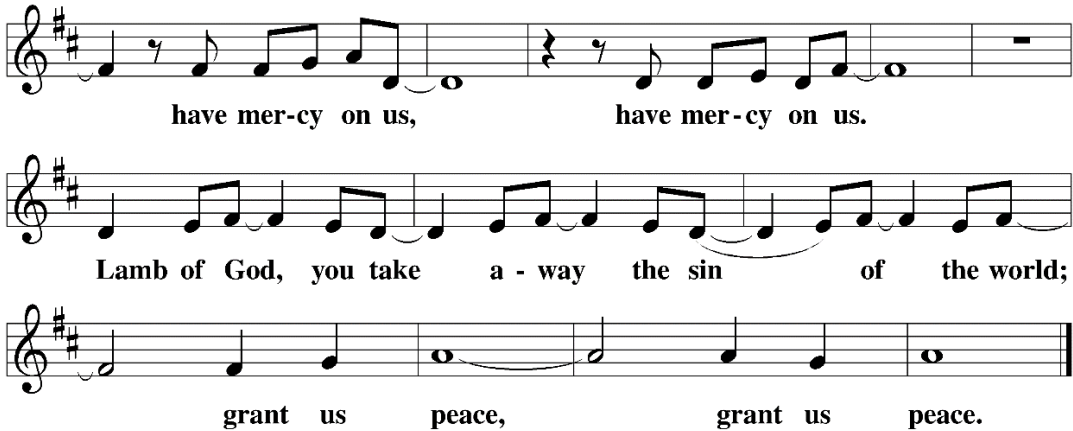
### *Lamb of God*

TFF Page 39

☑ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;

have mer-cy on us, have mer-cy on us.

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;



have mer-cy on us,                      have mer-cy on us.

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;

grant us peace,                      grant us peace.

**Communion Songs**

*When We Are Living  
In the Singing*

**ELW 639  
ELW 466**

**Prayer after Communion**

- Ⓐ Let us pray . . . Tender and merciful one, at your feast, you fed us who brought nothing, turning our emptiness into joy.
- Ⓑ **Filled with your abundant grace, send us now to be ministers of reconciliation, mending broken hearts, working for justice, and striving for peace among all people, in the name of Jesus. Amen.**

**Mission Minutes**

*Arise in body or spirit*

**Blessing**

- Ⓐ Live your lives in Christ, rooted and built up in God, and abound in thanksgiving. The blessing of the Holy Trinity, ✝ one God, be upon you and remain with you forever.
- Ⓑ **Amen.**

**Sending Song**

*Goodness is Stronger than Evil*

**ELW 721**

**Sending**

- Ⓐ Reconciled to God through Christ, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
- Ⓑ **Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude**

## God's Immeasurable Mercy

Forgive seventy-seven times? Jesus' instruction seems, at best, all but impossible and, at worst, dangerous. Sometimes the Bible has been used to excuse abuse in the name of mercy, but Jesus doesn't mean to condone suffering for its own sake or to commit us to endlessly enduring hurt and harm. Instead, Jesus wants to orient Peter and us to the all-encompassing nature of forgiveness. Seven days make the week complete and whole. Grace also extends to us the promise of wholeness, and yet forgiveness that comes from the heart is immeasurable.

Forgive seventy-seven times. The number suggests that forgiveness isn't to be doled out or strictly accounted for, but rather is endless. Forgiveness is not a singular event as much as it is a process. We are amazed and rightly inspired when some Christians are able to so quickly forgive others even the most horrendous crimes, like the Amish community after the West Nickel Mines School shooting in 2006, or some families of the Emanuel Nine in 2015. But today's gospel does not preclude the rest of us. Probably for most of us, forgiveness is much more the destination we are journeying toward than the place at which we've already arrived. Jesus' encouragement to Peter can encourage us as well.

Every day God calls us back to the everlasting promises made in baptism. Our participation in the church's worship life assures us that forgiveness is not something we endeavor to do alone, but rather is a lifelong journey in which we can turn to one another for support. Every Sunday at Jesus' table, we are freely given the bread of mercy and cup of forgiveness. God's grace sets all of us free to extend that same mercy to others. God's forgiveness erases every debt.

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### **8:00 am**

**Assisting Minister – Mark Anton**  
**Lector – Dave Neeb**  
**Cantor – Cindy Olson**  
**Musician – Cindy Olson**  
**Pastor – Ken Scheck II**

### **10:45 am**

**Assisting Minister – Vickey Argo**  
**Lector – Gwen Hansen**  
**Cantor – Vickey Argo**  
**Musician – Cindy Olson**  
**Pastor – Ken Scheck II**  
**Fellowship – Bill and Lorraine Freedlund**

**Educational Opportunity** The Mitten Synod is sponsoring class entitled *Kaleidoscope in Christ*; a five-week study focusing on resources that educate and deepen cultural competency regarding racial equity, our indigenous neighbors, and the LGBTQIA+ community. This study will be held via Zoom on Sundays from 4:00-5:00 pm and will run for five weeks (Sept. 24 – Oct. 22). If you are interested in more information, please visit <https://www.mittensynod.org/event/kaleidoscope-in-christ/>

Welcome to worship today! We hope you find what we have found - a loving Jesus who welcomes all. No matter your background or faith tradition, you will find that Grace Lutheran Church is a place that is full of love, care, and support. We are pleased that you are here among us to worship the ONE who continues to save each one of us. We don't need to ask, we don't need to be a good person, we don't need to have everything together. Jesus comes and saves us because he loves us.

Please use this QR Code to access online giving.



### Stewardship Information

Attendance: 54	Views: 244
Weekly Giving: \$2,615.00	Budget Amount: \$4,366.17
Online Giving for August: \$3,897.00	Noisy Offering: \$75.00
Grace Projects: \$1,100.00	Nursery Attendant: \$200.00
<i>Lifting Up</i> Campaign Needed: \$7,740.65	- Note starting need was \$25,000.00
<i>Lifting Up</i> Campaign Received: <u>-\$ 0.00</u>	
TOTAL Outstanding: \$7,740.65	

**THANK YOU FOR your generous support of Grace Projects.** We have secured funds to pay for the \$1,000.00 deductible for the roof replacement and repair.

**Prayer Chain** Grace has an activated prayer chain. If you want to be a part of the prayer chain, or have a request for prayer, please text or call Patti Comp at 248.408.5613.

**Adult Forum** continues to study Proverbs in the Gathering Area Sundays at 9:30 am. Hope to see you there.

**The nursery is available weekly during the 10:45 worship service.** Aurora Collins is the Nursery Attendant. She would love to have some little ones visit her. Please spread the word that Grace provides childcare during this worship service.

**Adopt-A-Highway** Brothers of Grace are cleaning up our section of the highway on Saturday, September 23 at 8:30. Many hands make light work so we are hoping to get a few more people to sign up on the sheet in the Gathering Area. Rain date is September 30. Questions can be directed to Joe Longcor.



**The Outreach Committee** invites you to help the Hand2Hand Program which provides food over the weekend to students in need in Hastings schools. We are collecting donations of Yoo-Hoo Chocolate Milk, pudding cups, Slim Jims, granola bars, individual size instant oatmeal, ramen noodles, and ready-to-eat mac and cheese. In addition, September items are as follows; microwave popcorn, individual snacks, peanut butter (small jars) individual toothbrushes, toothpaste, and dental floss. Please place all donations in the box at the front entrance. This month's donations are due by September 24. Green Street Church has expressed their gratitude for our participation in this program.

**All Saints Sunday** All Saints Sunday will take place this year on Sunday, November 5. There will be a sign-up soon in the Gathering Area.

**Social Activities** have planned a trip to Turkeyville on Saturday, October 14 at 12:00 p.m. Tickets are \$58 each which includes a turkey meal and the play *Forever Plaid*. The deadline for sign-up is **today, Sunday, September 17**. Please see the bulletin board in the Gathering Area for more details and information regarding payment.

**Community Worship and Meal** On Sunday, October 29, Grace Lutheran Church is having a combined worship service at 10:00 a.m. The Grace Notes Bell Choir is ringing, the worship style will be similar to the outdoor service, and our meal will allow people to express their heritage. You are encouraged to bring a dish of food to celebrate your ethnic background.

**Funeral Meal Coordinator Needed** Your help is needed if you have interest in being a volunteer funeral meal coordinator. A funeral meal coordinator arranges and works with volunteers who wish to provide a lunch or dessert for funerals based on family requests. If you are interested and would like to work with other volunteers to provide this service to our congregation, please contact the church office or a social activities committee member.

**Worship Committee Meeting** will be held September 24 after 10:45 service.

**God's Creation Calendars** will be available for \$5.00. Look for them to be coming soon.

