

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
LITTLETON, COLORADO

January 31, 2021
10:30 a.m. Sunday



FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

The God Whose Name is Grace

AS WE GATHER (Based on Ephesians 2:1-10)

Just how **BAD** are you really? A lot of people subscribe to the false notion that "we just do our best and God will make up the rest." That is actually the complete opposite of what the Bible has to say about your true nature. Paul doesn't mince words about how bad you really are by nature and by birth. He says you were **DEAD** in transgressions and sins. A dead person can accomplish no good thing - that's how bad your real situation is. You were born **DEAD** to God's ways. Dare you hear some more truth? Paul says you were by nature **OBJECTS OF WRATH** and that you are saved **NOT FROM YOURSELVES**. Paul uses a number of opposites to highlight the magnificence and mercy of what it means to be "saved by grace." Bottom line: it is an undeserved **GIFT**. That's why we weekly join at God's house to praise His Name. We don't get what we deserve: God's wrath. Instead, we get what we don't deserve: God's mercy, love and forgiveness, flowing from the cross of Jesus.

Gathering Song

Your Grace Is Enough

Maher

Great is Your faithfulness, O God;
You wrestle with the sinner's restless heart.
You lead us by still waters into mercy
And nothing can keep us apart.

**CHORUS: So, remember Your people,
Remember Your children,
Remember Your promise O God.
Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough, for me.**

Great is Your love and justice, God of Jacob;
You use the weak to lead the strong.
You lead us in the song of Your salvation,
And all Your people sing along. **CHORUS**

Your grace is enough, Your grace is enough, Your grace is enough, for me.

Remember Your people, Remember Your children,
Remember Your promise O God.
Your grace is enough, Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough, for me.

Yeah, Your grace is enough; Heaven reaches out to us.
Your grace is enough for me.
God, I sing: Your grace is enough; I'm covered in Your love.
Your grace is enough for me, for me.



✂ PREPARATION ✂

Pastoral Greeting

Opening Song

This Is Amazing Grace

Wickham

Who breaks the power of sin and darkness,
whose love is mighty and so much stronger?
The King of Glory, the King above all kings.

Who shakes the whole earth with holy thunder,
who leaves us breathless in awe and wonder?
The King of Glory, the King above all kings.

**CHORUS: This is amazing grace, this is unfailing love,
that You would take my place, that You would bear my cross.
You laid down Your life that I would be set free.
Oh, Jesus, I sing for all that You've done for me.**

Who brings our chaos back into order,
who makes the orphan a son and daughter?
The King of Glory, the King of Glory.

Who rules the nations with truth and justice,
shines like the sun in all of its brilliance?
The King of Glory, the King above all kings. **CHORUS**

Invocation

Confession *(Based on Ephesians 2:1-10)*

Pastor: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

People: **Lord, we confess the truth about ourselves as found in scripture. By nature we were born "dead in transgressions and sins." We have "followed the ways of this world" and the ways of "the ruler of the kingdom of this world." We have wrongly followed "the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient." Far from loving you with our whole heart, we are guilty of "gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature, following its desires and thoughts." We are without excuse. But your Word tells us you are "rich in mercy" and "rich in love." For the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ who died on our behalf we ask you forgive our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.**

Absolution *(Based on Ephesians 2:1-10)*

Pastor: Even though God's Word tells us the shocking truth about our sinful condition, calling us "by nature objects of wrath," it also tells us great Good News: "God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions." Upon this, your confession, God assures you that "By GRACE you have been saved, through faith -- and this is not

from yourselves, it is the gift of God -- not by works so that no one can boast." Because of His "great love" for you He has "raised you up with Christ and seated you with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus." Rejoice that He has "shown you the incomparable riches of His grace, expressed in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus."

People: Amen! Thanks be to God for His GIFT of GRACE!



Baptism of Ellie and Norah Lawrenz

Special Music

God Loves You

arr. Ruth Elaine Schram
The Lawrenz/Lindeman family

✂ WORD ✂

Epistle: Ephesians 2:1-10

(We were DEAD in transgressions and sins...by nature OBJECTS OF WRATH...saved NOT from yourselves...Paul uses opposites to explain the magnitude and mercy of GRACE.)

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions-it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show

the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God- not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel: Mark 1:21-28

(People are amazed at Jesus' authority over unclean spirits.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to Mark, the 1st Chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are--the Holy One of God!"

"Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly. "Come out of him!" The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.

The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, "What is this? A new teaching--and with authority! He even gives orders to evil spirits and they obey him." News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Children's Message

Christa Kirschner

Hymn of the Day

Grace Like Rain

Todd Agnew

Amazing grace how sweet the sound That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost but now I'm found Was blind but now I see so clearly

**CHORUS: Hallelujah grace like rain falls down on me
Hallelujah all my stains are washed away
(They're washed away)**

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear And grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear The hour I first believed **CHORUS**

When we've been there ten thousand years Bright shining as the sun
We've no less days to sing Your praise Than when we'd first begun **CHORUS X2**

Hallelujah yeah Hallelujah yeah Hallelujah yeah oh yeah
Hallelujah all my stains are washed away They're washed away

Sermon "The God Whose Name is Grace"

Pastor John Larson
TEXT: Ephesian 2:1-10

Catechism – Second Article – GRACE

Pastor: We confess the Second Article of the Apostles' Creed from Luther's Small Catechism. We are reminded by it that our salvation is totally a work of GRACE because by nature we were lost and condemned, in slavery to sin and under the power of the devil.

People: **I believe in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Pastor: What does this mean?

People **I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.**

Prayer of the Church

Pastor: Lord, in your mercy...

People: **Hear our prayer.**

Offering ***Offerings will be collected at the back, in the Narthex.***

✠ HOLY COMMUNION AT ASCENSION ✠

The Lord, our Host, invites to his Supper those who are baptized into the Christian faith, confess him as Savior, have been instructed and have examined themselves, truly repent of sins, believe the Risen Lord is present in the sacrament with his true body and blood, and resolve to live faithfully and obediently. For those with an intolerance to alcohol, the center ring of the tray contains grape juice. Gluten free wafers are available to those with wheat allergies. Children who have not been instructed, yet desire a blessing, are invited to come forward with arms crossed. When receiving the bread and wine, the communicant may respond with "Amen!", a word of affirmation and belief.

Holy Communion



✘ SACRAMENT ✘

Preface (Divine Service, Setting One)

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

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

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Words of Institution

DISTRIBUTION MUSIC

Grace Alone

Brown—Nelson

Ev'ry promise we can make,
Ev'ry prayer and step of faith,
Ev'ry diff'rence we will make is only by His grace.
Ev'ry mountain we will climb,
Ev'ry ray of hope we shine,
Ev'ry blessing left behind is only by His grace.

**CHORUS: Grace alone which God supplies,
Strength unknown He will provide.
Christ in us, our Cornerstone,
We will go forth in grace alone.**

Ev'ry soul we long to reach,
Ev'ry heart we hope to teach,
Ev'rywhere we share His peace is only by His grace.
Ev'ry loving word we say,
Ev'ry tear we wipe away,
Ev'ry sorrow turned to praise is only by His grace. **CHORUS X2**

General Communion Blessing

Benediction (Divine Service, Setting One)

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you
and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

People: **Amen.**



Closing Song

My Savior My God

Aaron Shust

I am not skilled to understand what God has willed what God has planned
I only know at His right hand Stands One who is my Savior

I take Him at His word and deed Christ died to save me this I read
And in my heart I find a need Of Him to be my Savior

That He would leave His place on high And come for sinful man to die
You count it strange so once did I Before I knew my Savior

**CHORUS: My Savior loves my Savior lives
My Savior's always there for me
My God He was my God
He is My God is always gonna be (REPEAT)**

Yes living dying let me bring My strength my solace from this spring
That He who lives to be my King Once died to be my Savior

That He would leave His place on high And come for sinful man to die
You count it strange so once did I Before I knew my Savior **CHORUS**

My Savior lives my Savior loves My Savior lives my Savior loves my Savior lives

Congregational Concerns

Dismissal

Pastor: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

(and Row by Row Dismissal)

Serving in Worship

OFFICIANT and CELEBRANT
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES
PRAISE TEAM

Pastor John Larson
Michael Zehnder
Youth Praise Team