

Do We Want What We Deserve?

October 1, 2023



Eighteenth Sunday
after Pentecost

WELCOME, GUESTS!!! We are so glad you came! If you have any questions or would like more information about our church, any member of Grace would be happy to speak with you. Please take the time to fill out a guest register at the church's entrance. Restrooms are located to the left as you exit the sanctuary. Congregational responses are indicated by indent and boldened letters.

THEME FOR TODAY'S FOCUS - What is our God like? Over the next four Sundays, the Church hears Jesus tell four parables which reveal characteristics of our God. Today's lessons cause the worshiper to ask: Is God fair? No, he's not. He doesn't give us what we deserve, and that's called mercy. In fact, he gives us what we don't deserve, and that's called grace. Our God is inconceivably gracious.

MORNING PRAYER : Lord God, you call us to work in your kingdom and leave no one standing idle. Help us to order our lives by your wisdom and to serve you in willing obedience; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

ORDER FOR TODAY'S SERVICE: SERVICE OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT— W, p.26

The "Service of Word and Sacrament" is a version of the historic liturgy of the Christian church.



OPENING HYMN:

#379

AMAZING GRACE-HOW SWEET THE SOUND

****Please Stand for The Last Verse****



1 A - maz - ing grace— how sweet the sound—
 2 The Lord has prom - ised good to me;
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares
 4 When we've been there ten thou - sand years,



That saved a wretch like me! I
 His Word my hope se - cures. He
 I have al - read - y come; 'Tis
 Bright shin - ing as the sun, We've



once was lost but now am found,
 will my shield and por - tion be
 grace has brought me safe thus far,
 no less days to sing God's praise



Was blind but now I see.
 As long as life en - dures.
 And grace will lead me home.
 Than when we'd first be - gun.

Text: John Newton, 1725–1807, st. 1-3, abr.; John P. Rees, 19th century, st. 4.

Tune: NEW BRITAIN (CM) *Columbian Harmony*, Cincinnati, 1829, alt.

The grace of our Lord (†) Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

And also, with you.

(2 Corinthians 13:14)

CONFESSION OF SINS

God invites us to come into his presence and worship him with humble and penitent hearts. Therefore, let us acknowledge our sinfulness and ask him to forgive us.

Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful, and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this, I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son (†) and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

LORD, HAVE MERCY

KYRIE

For all that we need in life and for the wisdom to use all your gifts with gratitude and joy, hear our prayer, O Lord.



For the steadfast assurance that nothing can separate us from your love and for the courage to stand firm against the assaults of Satan and every evil, hear our prayer, O Christ.



For the well-being of your holy Church in all the world and for those who offer here their worship and praise, hear our prayer, O Lord.

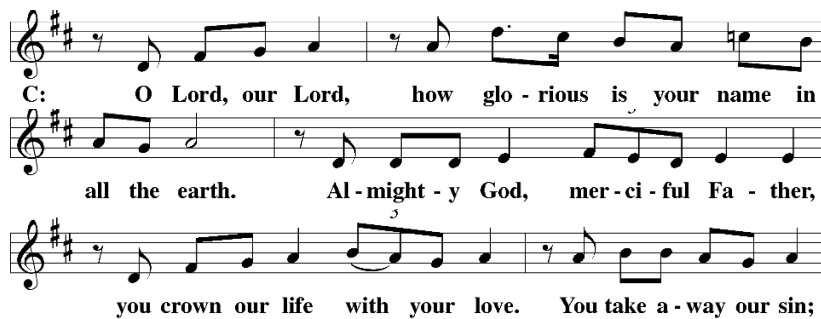


Merciful God, maker and preserver of life, uphold us by your power and keep us in your tender care:



The works of the Lord are great and glorious; his name is worthy of praise. (*Psalm 145:3*)

O LORD, OUR LORD



you com - fort our spir - it; you make us pure and
ho - ly in your sight. You did not spare your on - ly Son,
but gave him up for us all. O Lord, our Lord,
how glo - rious is your name in all the earth.
O Son of God, e - ter - nal Word of the Fa - ther,
you came to live with us; you made your Fa - ther known;
you washed us from our sins in your own blood. You are the
King of glo - ry; you are the Lord! O Lord, our Lord,
how glo - rious is your name in all the earth.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Lord God, you call us to work in your kingdom and leave no one standing idle. Help us to order our lives by your wisdom and to serve you in willing obedience; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever.

C: A - men.

****Please Be Seated****

FIRST LESSON:

ISAIAH 55: 6 – 9

How gracious is God? His call to repentance doesn't extend only backsliding Christians. His call to return to him isn't restricted to upright citizens. His invitation to call on him is not reserved for sensible, suburban folk with 2.1 children and a white picket fence. The LORD calls the ungodly and wicked men who worship lust and self.

Seek the LORD while he may be found! Call on him while he is near! Let the wicked man abandon his way. Let an evil man abandon his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will show him mercy. Let him turn to our God, because he will abundantly pardon.

Certainly my plans are not your plans, and your ways are not my ways, declares the LORD. Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my plans are higher than your plans.

PSALM OF THE DAY:

PSALM 27

Refrain



The Lord is my light and my sal - va - tion — of whom shall I
be a - fraid, of whom shall I be a - fraid?

Psalm tone



Refrain

Hear my voice when I call, O LORD;*
be merciful to me and answer me.
Do not hide your face from me,*
do not turn your servant away in anger;
you have been my helper.
Do not reject me or forsake me,*
O God my Savior.

Refrain

Though my father and mother forsake me,*
the LORD will receive me.
I am still confident of this: *
I will see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.
Wait for the LORD;*
be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.



**Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Refrain

SECOND LESSON

PHILIPPIANS 1: 18B – 27

Paul's confident words remind us that because of God's inconceivable grace, to live is Christ and to die is gain. Life lived under such grace is life filled with joy and ordered by God's wisdom.

Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, because I know that this will turn out for my deliverance, through your prayer and the support of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. This matches my earnest expectation and hope that I will in no way be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, so even now, Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. Yes, for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I am to go on living in the flesh, that will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet which should I prefer? I do not know. I am pulled in two directions, because I have the desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far. But, it is more necessary for your sake that I remain in the flesh. And since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and will continue with all of you, for your progress and joy in the faith. And so by my coming to you again, my goal is to give you even more reason to boast in Christ Jesus.

Just conduct yourselves in a way that is worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come to see you or am absent, I may hear about you that you are standing firm in one spirit, contending together with one soul for the faith of the gospel.

VERSE OF THE DAY

Alleluia. My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Alleluia. (2 Corinthians 12:9a)

C: Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

These words are writ - ten that we may be - lieve that

Je - sus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

****Please Stand****

GOSPEL

MATTHEW 20: 1 - 16

What is our God like? Jesus teaches us with a story, but we struggle with the lesson. The parable offends our finely honed sense of what's fair and what's not. Note the context: the disciples had just asked what they would receive in the kingdom, and Jesus promised them twelve thrones. Then he immediately quashes any prideful thoughts by saying that in the kingdom of heaven, God makes no distinction by merit or work (For the kingdom of heaven is like...). In reality, God is not fair; rather, he is inconceivably gracious.

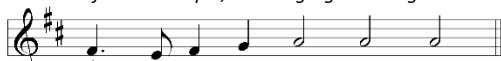
Indeed the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. After agreeing to pay the workers a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. He also went out about the third hour and saw others standing unemployed in the marketplace. To these he said, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will give you whatever is right.' So they went. Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour and did the same thing. When he went out about the eleventh hour, he found others standing unemployed. He said to them, 'Why have you stood here all day unemployed?'

"They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' "He told them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' When it was evening, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with the last group and ending with the first.'

"When those who were hired around the eleventh hour came, they each received a denarius. When those who were hired first came, they thought they would receive more. But they each received a denarius too. After they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner: 'Those who were last worked one hour, and you made them equal to us who have endured the burden of the day and the scorching heat!'

“But he answered one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not make an agreement with me for a denarius? Take what is yours and go. I want to give to the last one hired the same as I also gave to you. Can’t I do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ In the same way, the last will be first, and the first, last.”

After the Gospel, the congregation sings:



C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

HYMN OF THE DAY:

SALVATION UNTO US HAS COME

#390

Vs 1 – 5



1 Sal - va - tion un - to us has come By God's free grace
2 What God does in his law de - mand And none to him
3 It is a false, mis - lead - ing dream That God his law
4 Yet as the law must be ful - filled Or we must die
5 Since Christ has full a - tone - ment made And brought to us



and fa - vor. Good works can - not a - vert our doom;
can ren - der Brings wrath and woe on ev - 'ry hand
has giv - en That sin - ners can them - selves re - deem
de - spair - ing, Christ came and has God's an - ger stilled,
sal - va - tion, Each Chris - tian there - fore may be glad



They help and save us nev - er. Faith looks to
For man, the vile of - fend - er. Our flesh has
And by their works gain heav - en. The law is
Our hu - man na - ture shar - ing. He has for
And build on this foun - da - tion. Your grace a -



Je - sus Christ a - lone, Who did for all the
not those pure de - sires The spir - it of the
but a mir - ror bright To bring the in - bred
us the law o - beyed And thus the Fa - ther's
lone, dear Lord, I plead; Your death is now my



world a - tone; He is the one Re - deem - er.
law re - quires, And lost is our con - di - tion.
sin to light That lurks with - in our na - ture.
venge - ance stayed Which o - ver us im - pend - ed.
life in - deed, For you have paid my ran - som.

Text: Paul Speratus, 1484–1551, abr.; tr. composite.

Tune: ES IST DAS HEIL (87 87 887) *Etlich Cristlich liden*, Wittenberg, 1524, alt.

SERMON TEXT

SERMON:

MATTHEW 20: 1 - 16

BEING MERCIFUL RATHER THAN FAIR

*****Please Stand*****

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became fully human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

*****Please Be Seated*****

OFFERING – Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 9: 7: “Each one should give as he has determined in his heart, not reluctantly or under pressure, for God loves a cheerful giver.” This service is our gift to our guests; should you feel obliged to give, we thank you for your generosity.

At this time we invite our new members: Aaron and Shay Johnson, Dave and Leta Johnson, Michael Variz to come forward to be welcomed into member ship of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Dear members of Grace Lutheran Evangelical Lutheran Church: Aaron, Shay, Dave, Leta, and Michael, having been baptized and instructed in the teachings of the Word of God, you have announced your desire to become members of this congregation.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, our Lord Jesus Christ promises to confess before his Father in heaven those who faithfully confess him on earth. You have come before this Christian congregation to declare your faith and to unite with us in Christian love and fellowship.

Therefore, lift up your hearts to the God of all grace and joyfully answer these questions:

Do you believe in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? If so answer: I do. **I do.**

Do you believe that the teaching of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, as you have learned to know it from Luther’s Small Catechism, is faithful and true to the Word of God? If so, answer: I do. **I do.**

Do you intend to continue steadfast in the true Christian faith, be diligent in the use of God's Word and sacraments, and lead a godly life even to death? If so, answer: I do, and I ask God to help me.

I do, and I ask God to help me.

Will you support with your prayers, time, talents, and offerings the work our Lord has given to this congregation? If so, answer: I will, and I ask God to help me.

I will, and I ask God to help me.

Having heard your promises, we, the members of Grace Lutheran Evangelical Lutheran Church, receive you in fellowship and love, and invite you to share in our worship and mission, in the name of the Father and of the Son (†) and of the Holy Spirit.

Now, receive the hand of fellowship uniting you as a members of this your Congregation.

Let us pray. Lord Jesus, author and perfecter of our faith, in mercy you joined these brothers and sisters in Christ to your Church when they were born again of water and the Spirit. In mercy you taught them your saving truth. Grant that they may offer themselves as living sacrifices to you as their spiritual act of worship. Transform them by the renewing of their minds so that they will not conform to the pattern of this world. Help us live in love and harmony with one another and work together in serving you. Keep us united in your Spirit, and bring us at last to your eternal kingdom, where you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Go in peace.

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

#384

BY GRACE I'M SAVED



1	By	grace	I'm	saved,	grace	free	and	bound - less;
2	By	grace	God's	Son,	our	on -	ly	Sav - ior,
3	By	grace!	Oh,	mark	this	word	of	prom - ise
4	By	grace	to	tim -	id	hearts	that	trem - ble,
5	By	grace!	On	this	I'll	rest	when	dy - ing;



My soul, be - lieve and doubt it not. Why wa - ver
Came down to earth to bear our sin. Was it be -
When you are by your sins op - pressed, When Sa - tan
In trib - u - la - tion's fur - nace tried - By grace, de -
In Je - sus' prom - ise I re - joice. For though I



at this word of prom - ise? Has Scrip - ture ev - er
cause of your own mer - it That Je - sus died your
plagues your trou - bled con - science, And when your heart is
spite all fear and trou - ble, The Fa - ther's heart is
know my heart's con - di - tion, I al - so know my



false - hood taught? So then this word must true re -
soul to win? No, it was grace, and grace a -
seek - ing rest. What rea - son can - not com - pre -
o - pen wide. Where could I help and strength se -
Sav - ior's voice. My heart is glad; all grief has



main: By grace you, too, shall heav'n ob - tain.
lone, That brought him from his heav'n - ly throne.
hend God by his grace to you did send.
cure If grace were not my an - chor sure?
flown Since I am saved by grace a - lone.

Text: Christian L. Scheidt, 1709–61, abr.; tr. composite.

Tune: O DASS ICH TAUSEND ZUNGEN HÄTTE (DRETZEL) (98 98 88) Cornelius H. Dretzel, 1697–1775, alt.

****Please Stand****

THE SACRAMENT



The Lord be with you.

C: And al - so with you.



Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them up to the Lord.



Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

SANCTUS

C: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly is the Lord of hosts.
The whole earth is full of your glo - ry.
You are my God, and I will ex - alt you.
I will give you thanks, for you have be - come my sal -
va - tion. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly is the Lord of hosts.
The whole earth is full of your glo - ry.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my (†) body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my (†) blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

C: A - men.

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

O CHRIST, LAMB OF GOD

AGNUS DEI

C: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you



****Please Be Seated****

DISTRIBUTION

DISTRIBUTION – Please come forward at the direction of our usher. We do practice close communion according to Paul’s guidance in 1 Corinthians 11:27: “For if anyone eats and drinks in an unworthy manner because he does not recognize the Lord’s body, he eats and drinks judgment upon himself.” Therefore, if you are not a member of the ELS or WELS, please talk to Pastor Emmons before communing. Thank you for respecting our practices.

****Please Stand****

SONG OF SIMEON



CLOSING PRAYER

Hear the prayer of your people, O Lord, that the lips which have praised you here may glorify you in the world, that the eyes which have seen the coming of your Son may long for his coming again, and that all who have received in his true body and blood the pledge of your forgiveness may be restored to live a new and holy life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



BLESSING

Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and (†) give you peace.



C: A - men. A - men. A - men.

****Please Be Seated****

CLOSING HYMN:

#389

ROCK OF AGES, CLEFT FOR ME



1 Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, Let me hide
2 Not the la - bors of my hands Can ful - fill
3 Noth - ing in my hand I bring, Sim - ply to
4 While I draw this fleet - ing breath, When mine eye -



my - self in thee; Let the wa - ter and the blood
thy law's de - mands. Could my zeal no res - pite know,
thy cross I cling; Na - ked, come to thee for dress,
lids close in death, When I soar to worlds un - known,



From thy riv - en side which flowed Be of sin the
Could my tears for - ev - er flow, All for sin could
Help - less, look to thee for grace. Foul, I to the
See thee on thy judg - ment throne, Rock of A - ges,



dou - ble cure: Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.
not a - tone; Thou must save and thou a - lone.
foun - tain fly— Wash me, Sav - ior, or I die!
cleft for me, Let me hide my - self in thee!

Text: August M. Toplady, 1740–78, alt.
Tune: TOPLADY (77 77 77) Thomas Hastings, 1784–1872.

What We believe:

- Every word of the Bible is inspired, inerrant, and the only source of absolute truth.
- The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit form the triune God and is the only true God.
- All humans are born dead in sin and deserve eternal condemnation.
- Jesus Christ is the true God; he was conceived in Mary's womb by the Holy Spirit, adding a human nature to His divine nature.
- Only through His perfect work of redemption, which includes His perfect life, and innocent death, are all sins for all people forgiven and given credit for His perfect life.
- Only those whom the Holy Spirit, through Word and Baptism, blesses with faith in Jesus' redemptive work receive the benefit of it.
- The day is drawing near when Jesus will return to take all believers to heaven, condemn all unbelievers to eternal torment and destroy this present world.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Calendars – Printed October calendars are available by the bulletins. They have also been emailed out.

Trifolds – We have our trifolds back from the printers. These were printed for those of you who are uncomfortable with going door to door; they are available for you to take as many as you would like to pass out to your friends, neighbors, families, and co-workers. You can even leave them in a grocery cart or at your favorite restaurant.

Sunday Morning Bible Study – for October we are studying Luther's Small Catechism, with an emphasis on the commandments; we left off in August with the Third Commandment. Please feel free to bring questions, and to come and go as you like; all reading is voluntary.

Midweek Bible Study – Tuesday night Bible Study has been put on pause during October and will resume in November.

Zoom Meeting ID: 850 328 6057

Password: GraceOT

LMSG Retreat – October 25 – 30 Pastor Emmons will be preaching for the LMSG retreat at Camp Shiloh, Texas. There will be no communion on the October 29. If you have any pastoral needs in his absence, you may contact him by his cell phone. For more pressing concerns needing immediate care contact Elder Gene Baldwin at 541-610-9978.

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