

Grace Lutheran Church
2006 60th Street, Kenosha, Wisconsin 53140
Friday, September 1, 2023, 5:00 p.m.
Pastor: Rev. Jonathan Barker
Accompanist: Gracie Underwood

"Listen carefully, I am about to do a new thing, now it will spring forth; will you not be aware of it? I will even put a road in the wilderness, rivers in the desert." (Isaiah 43: 19)

Welcome —Rev. Jonathan Barker

Affirmation of Welcome Statement

P Let us affirm our welcome statement.

C *Grace Lutheran Church commits to live as a community of people seeking reconciliation and wholeness in our life together and in our ongoing outreach to the world. We commit to the work of anti-racism, anti-ableism, liberation, and environmental justice for all of God's beloveds.*

We affirm the sacredness of people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. We affirm the sacredness of all those who have experienced exclusion because of race, culture, disability, age, or physical demeanor. We affirm the sacredness of those who wrestle with addiction, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, or anything that too often divides us.

You are absolutely invited to share your gifts as you join us in this lifelong journey. We welcome and embrace all who are seeking God's love and grace. We need each other and our sincere hope is by being in community together we will know the kin-dom of God has come near.

P *We gather in the name of God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of the Earth and all creatures! Amen.*

Praise be to the Holy Trinity! God is sound and life, Creator of the Universe, Source of all life, whom the angels sing; wondrous Light of all mysteries known or unknown to humankind, and life that lives in all. (Hildegard of Bingen, 13th Century)



A Mighty River
Amos 5: 24

**Let Justice
and Peace Flow**
Season of Creation 2023

Opening Prayer

P Blessed are you, Creator of all to you be praise and glory forever as your dawn renews the face of the Earth bringing light and life to all creation bring hope to your people.

May we rejoice in this day you have made open our eyes to behold your presence and strengthen our hands to work for justice for all of creation, that the world may rejoice together and give you praise. (Adapted from Lancelot Andrewes, 1626)

Gracie Underwood solo: "Headed for the Hills"

Greeting - A Four Direction Prayer

P Let us turn our hearts to the West. From there the Thunders bring us cleansing rain.

C *Creator God, heal us and our relatives.*

P Let us turn our hearts to the North. Winter comes to us from there and calls us to rest

C *Creator God, restore our strength*

P Let us turn our hearts to the East. The morning Sun begins each day there

C *Creator God awaken us and help us to walk with a renewed life*

Let us turn our hearts to the South Where the warm winds come from to give us comfort and joy

C *Creator God soothe our aching souls*


P Let us turn our hearts to the Sky. From there our Creator sees all around us

C *Creator God help us to trust you to lead us*

P Let us turn our hearts to the Earth. From there quiet wisdom comes to teach us


C *Creator God hear us as we pray*

Psalmody- Psalm 85

 We are presently more aware than ever of the link between fossil fuels, and violence and war. Let us pray and proclaim with the Psalmist:

Lord, you poured out blessings on your land!
You restored the fortunes of Israel.
You forgave the guilt of your people—
yes, you covered all their sins.

C **May love and truth meet together
Let justice and mercy kiss**

 You held back your fury.
You kept back your blazing anger.


Now restore us again, O God of our salvation.
Put aside your anger against us once more.

Will you be angry with us always?

Will you prolong your wrath to all generations?

Won't you revive us again,
so your people can rejoice in you?

C **May love and truth meet together
Let justice and mercy kiss**


 Show us your unfailing love, O Lord,
and grant us your salvation.

I listen carefully to what God the Lord is saying,
for he speaks peace to his faithful people.
But let them not return to their foolish ways.

Surely his salvation is near to those who fear
him,
so our land will be filled with his glory.

Unfailing love and truth have met together.
Justice and peace have kissed!

C **May love and truth meet together
Let justice and peace kiss**

 Truth springs up from the Earth,
and righteousness smiles down from heaven.

Yes, the Lord pours down his blessings.
Our land will yield its bountiful harvest.

Righteousness goes as a herald before him,
preparing the way for his steps.

C **May love and truth meet together
Let justice and peace kiss** (Adapted from the New
Living Translation)

Litany of repentance

P God of light, life and love, God of land, and
sea, and sky, Who called creation into
existence and wove it into a rich tapestry, a

fine mat, a web of life Your Spirit hovered
over the face of the primordial waters, And
was breathed into humankind after You made
us equally in Your image.

Your Word was made flesh and embodied
Your divine love as it took root and bore
fruit in us, restoring our relationship with
You.

Yet we have not honored this relationship
with You and the rest of Your Creation. We
have disrespected the web of life We have
devalued the fine ecological mat that You
wove with so much love. We have uprooted
Your tree of life and sold it as logs. We have
forgotten that we sweat and cry saltwater
and have polluted Your oceans and rivers...
oceans that cry for Justice and rivers that
call to righteousness.

Instead of everything that has breath praising
You, all creation groans in pain as trees and
phytoplankton choke on carbon belched from
our desire for more, and our care for less.

All around we see the consequences of our
ecological sin as we extract and exploit, as
we defile and pillage our sister and brother
creation: Heatwaves and wildfires, Bitter
winters, Droughts and floods, Rising sea
levels and rising ocean temperatures, More
extreme cyclones, typhoons and hurricanes
Yet we are blind Creation roars in pain Yet
we are deaf You call us in Christ, to speak
truth to power and peace to this planet, our
common home Yet we are silent.

God of hope and healing May your Rivers of
Righteousness Wash away our apathy, our
greed and selfishness and reveal the deep
relationships You created for us with all
creation. Nourish us with the water of life
that restores, turning deserts of despair into
oases of hope.

May the waves of Your embrace Transform
us back into guardians of Your creation. May
the currents of Your justice Carry us to Your
lagoon of peace Where all creation may enjoy
Life in abundance

We pray in the name of the one who came
so that the whole cosmos may have
everlasting life, Jesus the Christ,

C **Amen.** (Rev. James Shri Bhagwan, General Secretary of the
Pacific Conference of Churches)

"All Creatures Lament"

1: *All creatures of our God and King
Lift up your voices let them ring
Fill the earth with lamentation
Cry out abuses of our pow'r
Tell what we lose with every hour
To our greed and depredation
Lord have mercy Christ have mercy
Lord have mercy*

2: *All creatures winging in the air
Cry out the failures of our care
Fill the sky with lamentation
Shout through the clouds of smoke and ash
Choked with the fumes of poison gas
Tell us of our degradation
Lord have mercy Christ have mercy
Lord have mercy*

3: *All creatures hidden in the seas
Lift up your anguished prayers and pleas
Fill the sea with lamentation
Teach us to see your wonders now
Help us to make a holy vow
Here to halt your devastation
Lord have mercy Christ have mercy
Lord have mercy*

4: *All creatures dwelling on the land
Join as we lift each heart and hand
Fill the world with lamentation
Mourn the destruction of our home
Weep with the fear of worse to come
Hear the groans of all creation
Lord have mercy Christ have mercy
Lord have mercy*

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Repentance

P In God there is forgiveness.

C Loving and all-seeing God, forgive us where we have failed to support one another and to be what we claim to be. Forgive us where we have failed to serve you; and where our thoughts and actions have been contrary to yours we ask your pardon.

P God forgives us; be at peace.

[Silence]

P Rejoice and be glad, for Christ is resurrection, reconciliation for all the human race And for the whole of creation.

C **Amen.** (Adapted from the New Zealand Prayer Book - Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia)

Reading: Amos 5:21-24

Justice, allied with peace, calls us to repent of our ecological sins and to change our attitudes and actions. Righteousness demands that we live in peace, not conflict with our human neighbors, and building right relationships with all of creation. We are invited to join the river of justice and peace on behalf of all creation and to converge our individual identities, of name, family or faith community, in this greater movement for justice, just like tributaries come together to form a mighty river.

Let us hear the words of prophet Amos:



I can't stand your religious meetings.

I'm fed up with your conferences and conventions.

I want nothing to do with your religion projects, your pretentious slogans and goals.

I'm sick of your fund-raising schemes, your public relations and image making.

I've had all I can take of your noisy ego-music.

When was the last time you sang to me?

Do you know what I want?

I want justice—oceans of it.

I want fairness—rivers of it.

That's what I want. That's all I want." (The Message Translation)

Excerpts from Pope Francis's sermon

The Affirmation of Faith

C You, O God, are supreme and holy. You create our world and give us life. Your purpose overarches everything we do. You have always been with us. You are God. You, O God, are infinitely generous, good beyond all measure. You came to us before we came to you.

You have revealed and proved your love for us in Jesus Christ, God made flesh, who lived and died and rose again.

You are with us now. You are God. You, O God, are Holy Spirit. You empower us to be your gospel in the world. You reconcile and heal; you overcome death. You are our God. We worship you. (Adapted from the New Zealand

Prayer Book)

Offering and offertory prayer

Intercessory Prayers

- P** Creator and Redeemer, as we approach you in prayer, make us walk in beauty and balance. Make us open our hearts and minds. Make us speak the truth. We pray for your community, the Church, the Body of Christ. We pray for all our relatives in the circle of life throughout all Creation, for those chosen to be our leaders and teachers.
- C** **In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.**
- P** We call upon the Earth, our planet home, with its beautiful depths, soaring heights and deep waters, its vitality and abundance of life, and together we ask:
- C** **That it may teach us and show us the way.**
- P** We call upon the mountains and deserts, the high green valleys and meadows filled with wild flowers, the snows, the summits of intense silence, and we ask:
- C** **That they may teach us and show us the way.**
- P** We call upon the land which grows our food, the nurturing soil, the fertile fields, the abundant gardens and orchards, and we ask:
- C** **That they may teach us and show us the way.**
- P** We call upon the forests, the great trees reaching strongly to the sky with earth in their roots and the heavens in their branches, the fir and the pine and the cedar and we ask:
- C** **That they may teach us and show us the way.**
- P** We call upon the creatures of the fields and forests and the seas, our brothers and sisters the wolves and deer, the eagle and dove, the great whales and the dolphin. We ask:
- C** **That they may teach us and show us the way.**
- P** We call upon all those who have lived on this earth, our ancestors and our friends, who dreamed the best for future generations, and upon whose lives our lives are built, and with thanksgiving, we call upon them too ...
- C** **That they may teach us and show us the way.**

- P** We call upon the nations of the world to hear the cry of those who have suffered loss of homes, lives and hope because of climate change. May they hear the cry of those whose schools, churches, hospitals, roads and infrastructure have been damaged. We pray for justice and for peace:
- C** **That they may teach us and show us the way.**
- P** We pray for all victims of war and violence. We pray for countries where the greed for oil and gas are leading to war. We hold in our hearts those areas where fossil fuel projects have destabilized communities and human rights abuses have occurred. We pray for areas where climate change has led to drought and conflict over water and resources is taking place. May we respond to the cry of the Earth and those living in poverty, as peacemakers who challenge the violence that threatens us all. We ask:
- C** **That they may teach us and show us the way.**
- P** Creator, you made the world and declared it to be good: the beauty of the trees, the softness of the air, the fragrance of the grass speaks to us; the summit of the mountains, the thunder of the sky, the rhythm of the lakes speak to us; the faintness of the stars, the freshness of the morning, the dewdrops on the flower speak to us. But above all, our heart soars, for you speak to us in Jesus the Christ, in whose name we offer these prayers.
- C** **Amen.** (Adapted from *Prayers of the People*, the Church of the Four Winds, Portland Oregon.)

The Lord's Prayer

- P** Let us pray with the Lord's Prayer that Jesus has taught us.
- [Pray the traditional version of the Lord's Prayer or the following version by Jim Cotter adapted in the New Zealand Prayer Book]:*
- C** **Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echoes through the universe! The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world! Your**

heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your communion of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on Earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another,
forgive us. In times of temptation and test,
strengthen us. From trials too great to
endure, spare us. From the grip of all that
is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power
that is love, now and forever. Amen.

Sharing of peace

- P** The peace of God be with you all.
- C** In God's justice is our peace.
- P** Brothers and sisters, Christ calls us to live in unity with each other and with the whole of Creation
- C** We seek to live in the Spirit of Christ.

Blessing of water

- P** Blessed are you, Creator God, who in Christ, the living water of salvation, blessed and transformed us.
Grant that when we are sprinkled with this water we will be refreshed by the power of the Holy Spirit. May we draw water from the springs of salvation. and continue to walk together in the new life we received at Baptism.

The sprinkling of the congregation

Liturgy from <https://seasonofcreation.org/>

Our "World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation" prayer service kicks off Grace church's celebration of Season of Creation September 1 through October 4.

The World Day of Prayer for Care of Creation started among the Orthodox Christian community in 1989 with the leadership of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, "the Green Patriarch." September 1 is the beginning of the Orthodox liturgical year.

In 2015, Pope Francis announced that the Roman Catholic Church would join the Orthodox Church in celebrating this World Day of Prayer, a move that was quickly followed by the National Council of Churches USA.

- P** Christ is the living water cleansing, refreshing, making all things new. Christ is the living bread; food for the hungry, strength for the pilgrim and the laborer.

Lord Have Mercy

Chorus: *Lord have mercy*

Lord have mercy

Lord have mercy

1: *Holy Spirit rest upon us*

Lead us in the way of your justice

Holy Spirit rest upon us

Teach us how to serve in our weakness

2: *Holy Spirit rest upon us*

Teach us how to tend to creation

Holy Spirit rest upon us

Guide us from our path of destruction

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Mustard Seed Prayer

- C** O Creator of the universe, let our leaders take bold action to protect our common home from the climate emergency. Let each one of their actions be guided by love for neighbor, love for creature, and love for all of your creation. And let me be a mustard seed today. In both small and big action, let what I do today multiply so our common home is protected for all creatures. Amen.