

**Gran-Park-Rollag Parish and Living Grace Lutheran Church**  
*In ministry partnership since 2017*

**Gran-Park-Rollag Parish**

*3 Churches – 1 Ministry: Energized by God  
To celebrate, share & show God's love*  
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**Living Grace Lutheran Church**

*A worshipping community of the ELCA focused on  
making known God's love and grace by:  
Welcoming Everyone, Sharing Jesus' story,  
Growing in faith and Serving beyond ourselves.*  
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Worships at The Garrick Theater,  
509 Front Street, Hawley, MN 56549

**Sunday, July 5, 2020 - Virtual Holy Communion Worship Service**

**Led by Pr. Hope Deutscher, Pr. Jim Greene, and Andrea Keene**

**Music Provided by: Pam Aakre, Piano; Pr. Hope Deutscher, Flute; Sam Helgeson, Trumpet**

**Pre-Service Music: America the Beautiful**

**Pam Aakre, Piano**

**Welcome/Announcements**

- *We have a variety of ways we are connecting with people – continuing Bible Studies and Book Studies on Zoom. Check out our Facebook page and Newsletter for details.*
- *Be a subscriber to the YouTube channel – Rollag Lutheran Church – when you do, you become one of the first people to know when a worship service is available for you to watch and it also helps boost our visibility with others who may be looking for a service to watch!*
- *The July-August GPR Newsletter will be published late. Deadline for articles is July 6<sup>th</sup>. Newsletters will be mailed out in early a few days later.*
- *We're grateful to start the slow process of worshipping together as we celebrated an outdoor service on June 21. We have a "Smart Team" who will be gathering to help us transition appropriately into indoor worship when the time is right. Our next outdoor worship will be at Rollag on July 19<sup>th</sup>. (SLIDE ABOUT 19<sup>th</sup> WORSHIP ???)*
- *A word about our service today:*
  - *You can follow along – bulletins are available on our websites!*
  - *Thanks to the children for being a part of the worship service. Andrea will have a children's sermon in a few minutes.*
  - *Today, we again invite you to participate in Virtual Communion.*
  - *A big thank-you to Pam Aakre, Sam Helgeson, and Pastor Hope for providing the music today.*
  - *OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS?? 4<sup>th</sup> of July.*

**Receiving of Offering (SLIDE)**

*Thank you for remembering the importance of continuing to Tithe your financial gifts. You can mail your offering to your church or give through [Tithe.ly](https://www.tithe.ly) online (mobile and online option) or by mail. Visit [livinggracehawley.org](http://livinggracehawley.org) or [gprparish.org](http://gprparish.org) for specific information.*

**Hymn – Great Is Thy Faithfulness #733 ELW / #771 WOV**

Verse 1: Great is thy faith-ful-ness, O God my Father;  
There is no shad-ow of turn-ing with thee;  
Thou chang-est not, thy com-pas-sions they fail not;  
As thou hast been thou for-ev-er wilt be.

Refrain: Great is thy faith-ful-ness! Great is thy faith-ful-ness!  
Morn-ing by morn-ing new mer-cies I see;  
all I have need-ed thy hand hath pro-vid-ed;  
great is thy faith-ful-ness, Lord un-to me.

Verse 2: Sum-mer and win-ter and spring-time and har-vest,  
Sun, moon, and stars in their cours-es a-bove  
Join with all na-ture in man-fold wit-ness  
To thy great faith-ful-nes, mer-cy, and love.

Verse 3: Par-don for sin and a peace that en-dur-eth,  
thine own clear pres-ence to cheer and to guide;  
strength for to-day and bright hope for to-mor-row,  
bless-ings all mine, with ten thous-and be-side!

REFRAIN

**Children’s Message Andrea Keene, GPR Youth Director**

**Confession and Forgiveness**

I want you to hear these very familiar words that we confess together:

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

**Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Join with me in confession our sins...

Most merciful God,

**we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

**Hear these words of Forgiveness:**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## **Scripture: Romans 7:14-25 (The Message Translation)**

*[The Apostle Paul writes]<sup>14-16</sup> I can anticipate the response that is coming: "I know that all God's commands are spiritual, but I'm not. Isn't this also your experience?" Yes. I'm full of myself—after all, I've spent a long time in sin's prison. What I don't understand about myself is that I decide one way, but then I act another, doing things I absolutely despise. So if I can't be trusted to figure out what is best for myself and then do it, it becomes obvious that God's command is necessary.*

*<sup>17-20</sup> But I need something more! For if I know the law but still can't keep it, and if the power of sin within me keeps sabotaging my best intentions, I obviously need help! I realize that I don't have what it takes. I can will it, but I can't do it. I decide to do good, but I don't really do it; I decide not to do bad, but then I do it anyway. My decisions, such as they are, don't result in actions. Something has gone wrong deep within me and gets the better of me every time.*

*<sup>21-23</sup> It happens so regularly that it's predictable. The moment I decide to do good, sin is there to trip me up. I truly delight in God's commands, but it's pretty obvious that not all of me joins in that delight. Parts of me covertly rebel, and just when I least expect it, they take charge.*

*<sup>24</sup> I've tried everything and nothing helps. I'm at the end of my rope. Is there no one who can do anything for me? Isn't that the real question?*

*<sup>25</sup> The answer, thank God, is that Jesus Christ can and does. He acted to set things right in this life of contradictions where I want to serve God with all my heart and mind, but am pulled by the influence of sin to do something totally different.*

## **Message**

### **Pr. Hope Deutscher**

When I was in high school, I spent one summer caring for three children – Brian, Kevin and Michelle – down the road in rural Bismarck, ND. One of the young boys was Kevin. Now Kevin was mischievous...always looking for trouble. One morning the rain had poured and poured...and then stopped. Kevin wanted to go outside so the four of us headed outside. As part of the instructions going outside, I told the kids not to play in the mud. The kids seemed happy riding bikes and then the phone rang and I turned away for a minute. I came back out and found Kevin covered in mud from head to toe – now needing to go to the bathroom of course. I asked him "What did you do? I told you not to play in the mud!" He so cutely responded: "I played in the wet dirt." He was devilishly cute in learning a way around my words – but his actions spoke louder than words!

In our scripture reading, Paul really wants to keep the law but its demands exceed what he can do. The law measures his sin. Further, the law incites sin by putting an idea in his head. He maybe was just like little Kevin...Paul can't meet the standards of the law and become righteous or good and upstanding...he realizes he needs God to deliver him from his sin...and his guilty conscience.

Paul wasn't always the writer standing up for Jesus and who Jesus was. He persecuted the Body of Christ – not because he failed the law, but because he kept a law that sin had hijacked for its own purposes. It was a saving moment. He was writing Romans during a transformational time in his ministry. He's preparing to take up a financial collection to show unity between Gentile and Jewish believers and to conduct missionary work in Spain – in the western part of the Roman Empire. The Roman congregations are in tension and Paul wants to share the gospel – that God's salvation is for ALL believers. Those who believe have a restored relationship with God. They are justified apart from works of the law, and freed from sin and everything else that keeps us from being less than what God created us to be. The gospel is God's power of salvation for each of us...for the church and for all of creation.

Just a few minutes ago, we joined with other Christians in confessing our sins. The Apostle Paul urges us to remember that sin should not have dominion over us, but instead, we are called to live in God's grace. Sin loses its power when we name it and ask for forgiveness...and when we remember

our baptism and the promises we receive in that... God breaks the bonds of sin. But it's so easy to let that sin hold us back, hold us in fear.

In the Catechism, Martin Luther said that confession consists of 2 parts: "The first is our work and act, when I lament my sin and desire comfort and restoration for my soul. The second is a work that God does, when he absolves me of my sins through the Word of God placed on the lips of another person."<sup>1</sup> (p. 478).

At times, we are all like little Kevin...wanting to skirt around the truth of sins...looking for and finding wet dirt instead of mud...may we acknowledge our sins and sinful nature to find the mud...and also to remember that in the waters of Baptism God cleanses us and forgives us...giving us freedom from the bondage of sin and all that holds us back. May you remember these life-giving promises! Amen.

### Hymn of the Month: *His Name is Wonderful*

*His name is Won-der-ful, his name is Won-der-ful, his name is won-der-ful,  
Je-sus, my Lord; he is the might-y King, Mas-ter of ev-ery-thing,  
His name is Won-der-ful, Je-sus my Lord. He's the great Shep-herd, the  
Rock of all a-ges, Al-might-y God is he; bow down be-fore him,  
Love and a-dore him, his name is Won-der-ful, Je-sus my Lord.*

### Gospel: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

[Jesus spoke to the crowd saying:] <sup>16</sup>"To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,

<sup>17</sup>'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.'

<sup>18</sup>For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon'; <sup>19</sup>the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

<sup>25</sup>At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; <sup>26</sup>yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. <sup>27</sup>All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

<sup>28</sup>"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.

<sup>29</sup>Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup>For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

### Message with Virtual Communion

Pr. Jim Greene

Have you ever come out of a deep sleep too quickly and been disoriented?

Ever had someone explain something you couldn't take in and understand?

What about the times when you can't learn because you're too tired?

Ever gotten chewed out while in any of these states? No fun! (**review**)

Jesus in the gospel of Matthew is talking to a people who just can't seem to wake up and smell the coffee; or understand what is being explained; or really pay attention. At first it sounds like Jesus is wanting to chew people out but then he shares a wonderful thought we have mistakenly used just at funerals. "**Come** to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. **29 Take** my yoke upon you, and **learn** from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. **30 For** my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

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<sup>1</sup> Small Catechism's section "How people are to be taught to confess" (ELW, p. 1165) and the Large Catechism's section "A brief exhortation to confession" (Book of Concord, Kolb/Wengert, 2000, pp. 476-480).

To make the message visual, Jesus uses a familiar object, a yoke, to help people see how they are not having to pull the load of life alone. Paul reminds us of this in Philippians 4: 13 "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Our journey is never to be on our own. No matter how out of it we might feel, God doesn't give up on us.

Looking at Matthew 11: 28 - 30 I'd like to lift up 3 words: Come, Take, Learn

**COME:** 2 parts: 1) a gentle word- come here - trust me. I'm here to help.  
2) Bring your whole self to God. A friend isn't a friend if you have to pretend; and God isn't God if you can't lay everything before God. **THIS IS IMPORTANT!** If you can't bring your whole self to God - "FIRE" that God!

**TAKE:** Jesus says, "Take my yoke upon you." Hard to appreciate life by standing on the sidelines. Can't learn to swim if we stay on the shore. Life's lessons are learning from our mistakes and our successes. We don't have to be afraid of anything because Jesus is yoked with us!

**LEARN:** isn't this what life is all about- learning? Everything and everyone is our teacher- the valleys and the mountain tops. Are we willing to learn?

At times may feel disoriented, dumber than a box of rocks, or too tired to care. It helps to hold the visual of being "Yoked with Jesus" forever!

### **Virtual Communion**

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 in 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 in the remembrance of me.

### **Communion**

The body of Christ, given for you.  
The blood of Christ, shed for you.

### **Prayers of Intercession**

Gracious God, help us to hear your invitation to "Come to you" and to bring our whole self with us. All our hurts and joys; all our confusions and excitements; all our doubts and faith. Help us to learn from what we struggle with trusting you are coming with us every step of the way.  
Lord in your mercy; Hear our Prayer

Blessed Jesus, you call us to take and share the yoke with you as we learn to listen to God; open ourselves up to your creative help; and when we struggle with life - we can know we're never on our own. Lord in your mercy; Hear our Prayer

Comforting Holy Spirit, you inspire us to learn as we live a life filled with times of navigating the most difficult of valleys as well as times on the mountain top when everything seems clear. Help us to face our griefs, losses, and the uncertainties of life trusting you'll help us to see our ways through. Guide us to notice and to be grateful for the many blessings we can overlook. As you pray for us help us to pray for each other. Lord in your mercy; Hear our Prayer

Triune God, be with all our leaders so they might come to you for wisdom and direction in the government, communities, and our churches; be with our front line workers as they take on the difficult task of helping people be whole and healthy; and be with each of us as we learn to carry our portion of the yoke as we build each other and the world up. Be with all our thoughts and petitions as we come again to the prayer Jesus taught us.

### **Lord's Prayer**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us...**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.**

### **Benediction**

The Apostle Paul reminds us in Romans Chapter 8:  
Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers,  
nor things present, nor things to come,  
nor powers, nor height, nor depth,  
nor anything else in all creation,  
will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.  
God, the creator, ✚ Jesus, the Christ,  
and the Holy Spirit, the comforter,  
bless you and keep you in eternal love. **Amen.**  
Go in peace. Christ is with you. **Thanks be to God.**

### **Hymn – How Great Thou Art #856 ELW / #532 LBW**

**Pam Aakre, Piano and Sam Helgeson, Trumpet**

Verse 1: *O Lord my God when I in awe-some won-der con-sid-er  
all the works thy hand hath made, I see the stars, I hear the might-y?  
thun-der, thy pow'r through-out the u-ni-verse dis-played;*

Refrain: *Then sings my soul, my Savior God to thee, how great though art!  
How great thou art! Then sings my soul, my Sav-ior God, to thee,  
how great thou art! How great thou art!*

### **Hymn – Battle Hymn of the Republic #890 ELW / #332 LBW**

**Pam Aakre, Piano and Sam Helgeson, Trumpet**

*Mine eyes have seen the glo-ry of the com-ing of the Lord;  
He is tram-pling out the vin-tage where the grapes of wrath are stored;  
He has loosed the fate-ful light-ning of his ter-ri-ble swift sword:  
His truth is march-ing on.  
Glo-ry, glo-ry! Hal-le-lu-jah! Glo-ry, glo-ry! Hal-le-lu-jah!  
Glo-ry, glo-ry! Hal-le-lu-jah! His truth is march-ing on.*