

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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Sunday, July 19, 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

Pre-Service Music: God Will Take Care of You **Pam Aakre, Piano**
Walter S. Martin; Arr. By Cindy Berry

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!*
- *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.*
- *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 and Pastor Hope for providing the music today.*
 - **OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS??**

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 online (mobile and online option) or by mail. Visit livinggracehawley.org or gprparish.org for specific information.

Hymn – Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee #836 ELW / #551 LBW **Pam Aakre, Piano,**
Pr. Hope Deutscher, Flute

Verse 1: Joy-ful, joy-ful we a-dore thee, God of glo-ry, Lord of love!
Hearts un-fold like flow'rs be-fore thee, prais-ing thee, their sun-above.

Melt the clouds of sin and sad-ness, drive the gloom of doubt a-way.
Giv-er of im-mor-tal glad-ness, fill us with the light of day.

Verse 2: All thy works with joy sur-round thee, earth and heav'n re-lect thy rays,
Stars and an-gels sing a-round thee, cen-ter of un-bro-ken praise.
Field and for-est, vale and moun-tain, flow'ry mead-ow, flash-ing sea,
Chant-ing bird, and flow-ing foun-tain call us to re-joice in thee.

Verse 3: Thou art giv-ing and for-giv-ing, ev-er bless-ing, ev-er blest,
Well-spring of the joy of liv-ing, o-cean-depth of hap-py rest!
Thou our Fa-ther, Christ our broth-er, all who live in love are thine;
Teach us how to love each oth-er, lift us to the joy di-vine!

Children's Message Andrea Keene, GPR Youth Director

Confession and Forgiveness

Wouldn't it be nice if everything we thought, said, and did was perfect? Sometimes we can fool ourselves into feeling what we do is better than what others do and we can let pride, ego, and self blind us from the weeds in our lives.

We confess to God and to each other as to how we fool ourselves into believing the weeds in our lives are good for us or others. We use the weeds of self-sufficiency, self-pity, or self-righteousness to deceive us into believing we better than others and don't need God. Sadly, we can even turn away from God when we see our sinful weeds instead of trusting God is with us to remove what we don't need while nurturing what we do need.

Hear again these words of forgiveness: Gracious God, like a good gardener, help us to see and feel the weeds in our lives and partner with us in removing them. With your forgiveness, help us to make space in our lives for the good soil to produce a healthy crop of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Heal the soil of our hearts to be of help to all. Amen.

Gospel: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43 (JIM)

²⁴[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field;²⁵but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. ²⁶So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?' ²⁸He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' ²⁹But he replied, 'No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'

³⁶Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." ³⁷He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴²and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!"

Message

Pr. Jim Greene

How many mothers have been given a bouquet of dandelions by a loving child? In the innocence of childhood we use this weed to show our love.

How many weeds in our lives have we nourished because they looked, felt, or seemed good to us? Weeds like “self-sufficiency” - self-righteousness - or self-pity! Notice how “self” can be a sign of the weeds in our lives.

Jesus tells a parable to point out weeds exist in our lives. Even though good seeds were planted, an enemy planted weeds (cheat weeds- weeds which look like wheat - also called wolves in sheep’s clothing because of how they can devastate a field). The owner doesn’t pull out the weeds - because in doing so he might pull out the wheat. So he waits until the harvest at which time he’ll know for sure the good from the bad and the wheat and the weeds will be separated with confidence.

However, until that time the weeds and the wheat will be growing together. In everyone of our lives we have good seed and weeds. Our calling is to invite God to help us nurture the good seed and eliminate the weeds in our lives - remembering weeds have quite the staying power!

* One of the weeds in our lives is our ability to judge others. The good seed will grow when we learn to communicate with each other in respectful and helpful ways. We don’t have to agree nor give in; we can listen; be open.

* Another weed is impatience. How many things have been hurt or ruined because we’re in a hurry. The good seed is the ability to pause and listen for God’s guidance.

* One more weed is fear of pain which can lead to overusing activities to fool us in believing we can avoid pain. The good seed walking with God through our discomfort and pain because we know pain is not unique to us.

What other weeds can we uncover and remove in order to make space for the good seeds God has planted inside of us? Can we trust God is patient with us and will guide us through the weeds to a good crop today and a final harvest in heaven?

Hymn of the Month: *His Name is Wonderful*

Pam Aakre, Piano

*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.*

Scripture: Romans 12-25 (HOPE)

¹²So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—¹³for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

¹⁸I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; ²⁰for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor

pains until now; ²³and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Message

Pr. Hope Deutscher

Let us pray, Merciful God, your creatures cry—creation groans—but we turn away; we surround ourselves with noise. We are quick to excuse ourselves from responsibility: we are young; we are old; we are tired; we are busy. It is hard to imagine that we might make a difference. May we be washed clean, our imaginations and hearts restored, so that we might go forward with love and blessing. Amen.

Storms...Some people like to watch a good thunderstorm...you know, the crazy storm chasers. Unfortunately, I hate thunderstorms...recently on vacation in South Dakota it seemed like every afternoon we'd experience a storm popping up – hail, and more hail, some wind and rain. My mother has tomato plants in big pots on the back deck – and we'd have to use a dolly cart to put them in under the roof overhang so they wouldn't get pummeled. As I was driving home I was trying to outrun another storm. The sky looked dark and gloomy. This text came to mind as I was driving northward over hills and through the plains of southwestern North Dakota.

We can focus on the storms of our life...look at our lives with the attitude that the glass is half full...but Paul speaks of hope. Hope that is rooted in an ability to see what one does not yet see. Hope is anticipating an inheritance that has not yet been received. As Paul says, "we are children of God, and if children, then heirs (vs. 16-17). Hope for a glory that is about to be revealed to us:

1). It creates contrast between what is hoped for and the present state of affairs...what we get. It creates uneasiness, anxiety...groaning. We express the pain of and lament of the way things are not supposed to be and how things are. The one who hopes has a restless heart...seeing what we get, what is in front of us...and is disappointed.

We don't escape the suffering ...and in fact, those who hope may be able to endure the suffering. Perhaps that is what Paul means when he says "We wait for it with patience" (Vs. 25). Patience is not satisfied with the present but lives towards a future promised by God.

2). Hope fuels an imagination for the way things out to be. Hope for things not yet, but promised to us...empowers us to confront evil, knowing their way is not the final way.

The one who hopes works to get better in the present. This hope that Paul talks about is not about wishing for something better...it's rooted in knowing who God is and what God has done.

The beauty of a thunderstorm is that it usually cleanses things...yes, there can be horrendous damage but just last week when several storms blew through – my yard had been dry and parched with a layer of cotton on it, blown out of the trees. After an inch of refreshing rain, all of creation looked fresh and where flowers had been wilting were now springing back to life.

We are cleansed and renewed in our baptism...and through Holy Communion. We connect with God...not only in the Sacraments but daily.

We not only grown in pain and despair...but we groan in redemption, which is not yet completed...but has already been started in us.

St. Paul in his letter to the church at Rome focuses on God as merciful judge. He proclaims that all creation will be freed from decay and receive redemption. Paul reminds us our hope lies with God, our parent through a spirit of adoption. The exercise of judgment and mercy reflects God's emphasis on justice over fairness. A fair God condemns those who do evil. A just God moves beyond fairness to justice, peace, and reconciliation.

This reconciliation and renewal comes through deliverance and trust...

LITANY OF TRUST (Written by Sr. Faustina Maria Pia, SV SISTERS OF LIFE, Annunciation Motherhouse 38 Montebello Road Suffern, NY 10901, 845.357.3547 sistersoflife.org)

From the belief that I have to earn Your love	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear that I am unlovable	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the false security that I have what it takes	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear that trusting You will leave me more destitute	Deliver me, Jesus.
From all suspicion of Your words and promises	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the rebellion against childlike dependency on You	Deliver me, Jesus.
From refusals and reluctances in accepting Your will	Deliver me, Jesus.
From anxiety about the future	Deliver me, Jesus.
From resentment or excessive preoccupation with the past	Deliver me, Jesus.
From restless self-seeking in the present moment	Deliver me, Jesus.
From disbelief in Your love and presence	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being asked to give more than I have	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the belief that my life has no meaning or worth	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of what love demands	Deliver me, Jesus.
From discouragement	Deliver me, Jesus.
That You are continually holding me, sustaining me, loving me	Jesus, I trust in You.
That Your love goes deeper than my sins and failings and transforms me	Jesus, I trust in You.
That not knowing what tomorrow brings is an invitation to lean on You	Jesus, I trust in You.
That You are with me in my suffering	Jesus, I trust in You.
That my suffering, united to Your own, will bear fruit in this life and the next	Jesus, I trust in You.
That You will not leave me orphan, that You are present in Your Church	Jesus, I trust in You.
That Your plan is better than anything else	Jesus, I trust in You.
That You always hear me and in Your goodness always respond to me	Jesus, I trust in You.
That You give me the grace to accept forgiveness and to forgive others	Jesus, I trust in You.
That You give me all the strength I need for what is asked	Jesus, I trust in You.
That my life is a gift	Jesus, I trust in You.
That You will teach me to trust You....and Jesus teaches us that trust in the words of the Lord's Prayer:	

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.

We find great trust and restoration in hearing the words that Jesus told his disciples, some of whom would betray him and bring him pain...but he still loved them and wanted to bring healing and restoration to their relationship with him...and God.

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.

Communion Blessing

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you...as you are reminded that God loves you and despite the storms of our present life, we have a promise that is more than we could imagine.

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 – *Sing to the Lord of Harvest #694 ELW / #412 LBW*

Pam Aakre, Piano and Pr. Hope Deutscher, Flute

Verse 1: Sing to the Lord of har-vest your songs of love and praise;
With joy-ful hearts and voic-es your al-le-lu-ias raise;
By him the roll-ing sea-sons in fruit-ful or-der move;
Sing to the Lord of harvest a joy-ous song of love.

Verse 2: God makes the clouds drop fat-ness, the des-erts bloom and spring,
The hills leap up in glad-ness, the val-leys laugh and sing.
God fills them with his full-ness, all things with large in-crease,
And crowns the year with good-ness, with plen-ty and with peace.