

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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PO Box 477, Hawley, MN 56549
Worships at The Garrick Theater,
509 Front Street, Hawley, MN 56549

Sunday, August 9, 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: Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us
(Written by Dorothy Thrupp)

Pam Aakre, Piano

Welcome/Announcements

- *Pastoral Care: Pastor Hope Deutscher and Pastor Jim Greene are available for pastoral care. If you or a loved one are hospitalized or ill, we would love to be caring for you. Please call or email us at the numbers above. Andrea Keene is also available to talk to parents and youth.*
- *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.*
 - *7 PM Every other Monday night Paul Tillich Bible Study*
 - *10 AM Wednesdays Luke Bible Study*
 - *7 PM Wednesdays Women's Book Study "What Happens When Women Walk in Faith" by Lysa Terkeurst*
- *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!*
- This month we are going to look at some of the women who have stories that related to us in a variety of ways. From Sarah, to Hannah, to Joanna, Lydia and Dorcas – we'll hear the story of these women, how does our story connect to them and what can we take from their story and learn from them?
 - August 2: Sarah (Genesis 12:1-20; 16:1-8; 17:1-22; 18:1-15; 21:1-13)*
 - August 9: Hannah (1 Samuel 1:1-2:11; 2:19-21)*
 - August 16: Joanna (Luke 8:1-3, 24:10)*
 - August 23: Lydia (Acts 16:6-40)*
 - August 30: Dorcas (Acts 9:36-43)*

- *Welcome to Living Grace! This morning we are again worshipping God from Living Grace's home in the Garrick Theater in Hawley. As a mission congregation, one of our favorite hymns is "All Are Welcome"! This morning is no different – we are glad you are here and worshipping with us.*
- *Next Outdoor Worship Service: 9:30 AM Sunday, August 16, 2020*
Our next one will be Sunday, August 16th at 9:30 a.m. on the lawn outside of Rollag Lutheran. All are welcome to join us for this worship service. We will continue to provide online worship services, even on Sundays when we host an outdoor one.
- *Smart Team – under the advisement of our Bishop Bill Tesch, our Mutual Ministry Team, which represents our 4 congregations has become the Smart Team. Parish Council President Chad Mickelson has also joined this Smart Team, which is evaluating and discussing how and when we can safely worship inside our buildings. While we all entered the pandemic in the same way, it has become clear that the leadership teams and councils at our 4 congregation will need to individually address issues related to their particular building and situation. Those conversations will be happening over the next several weeks as they focus on questions – and answers – related to*
 - *Building Space and Sanitization*
 - *How many people can be in our worship space?*
 - *What cleaning protocol will we have?*
 - *What are insurance protocols we need to follow, etc.?*
 - *Health of staff, volunteers and congregation*
 - *We want to ensure that everyone is healthy and remains healthy as they enter the building and afterwards. So how do we do that in respectful and caring ways?*
 - *And worship – how to receive offering, provide communion, removing paper, Bibles and hymnals from pews, and how to provide a participatory worshipful experience for all of us.*
- *A word about our service today:*
 - *You can follow along – large print bulletins are available on our websites!*
 - *Today, we again invite you to participate in Virtual Communion. Please prepare some bread/crackers and wine/juice to share communion during today's service.*
 - *Thanks to the children for being a part of the worship service. Andrea will have a children's sermon in a few minutes.*
 - *Thanks to Pam Aakre and Pr. Hope for providing music.*
 - *Today Pr. Hope continues the 5-week sermon series Celebrating Women in the Bible. Today we hear Hannah's story. Provoked by another woman's malice, Hannah refused to respond in kind. Instead, she poured out her hurt and sorrow to God, allowing him to vindicate her. Hannah proclaimed God's power and goodness in a prayer that was echoed more than a thousand years later by Mary, the mother of Jesus.*

Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship and we light the Christ Candle.

(LIGHT CHRIST CANDLE)

Confession and Forgiveness

Let us come before God, who already knows our hearts and welcomes our humility.

**Loving God, our thoughts, our words, and our deeds are an open book to you.
You have seen where we fall short.**

**You know where we have strayed as individuals – and as your church.
In your mercy, forgive us and guide us into your ways of beings –
Ways of welcoming, paths of mercy, habits of grace –
So that we may live renewed in the joy of our salvation,
Prepared, equipped and ready to meet Christ in our neighbors and in your creation. Amen.**

God's ways are not our ways and God's thoughts are not our thoughts.
Before we were made, God brought creation out of nothing and peace out of chaos.
In this same love, God unyokes you from sin and binds you into a new life and new living in Christ
Jesus, our Savior and Lord – who says Do Not Be Afraid, I have come to save you! Amen.

**Hymn – For All the Faithful Women (ELW #419)
Pam Aakre, Piano and Pr. Hope Deutscher, Flute**

Verse 1: For all the faith-ful wom-en who served in days of old.
To you shall thanks be giv-en; all, their stor-y told.
They served with strength and glad-ness in tasks your wis-dom gave.
To you their lives bore wit-ness, pro-claimed your pow-'r to save.

Verse (Written by Pam Aakre):
To Hannah, praying childless, before the throne of grace,
You gave a son and called him to serve before your face.
Grant us her perseverance;
Lord, teach us how to pray and trust in your deliv'rance
When darkness hides our way.

Last: All praise to God, the Fa-ther! All praise to Christ the Son!
All praise to God the Spir-it, who binds the church as one!
With saints who went be-fore us, with saints who wit-ness still,
We sing glad al-le-lu-ias and strive to do your will.

Celebrating Women in Scripture: Hannah

(Selected verses from 1 Samuel 1:1-2:11; 2:19-21)

Provoked by another woman's malice, Hannah refused to respond in kind. Instead, she poured out her hurt and sorrow to God, allowing him to vindicate her. Hannah proclaimed God's power and goodness in a prayer that was echoed more than a thousand years later by Mary, the mother of Jesus.

1 Samuel 1:2-3a, 4-7, 20-22, 24-28; 2:1-11 - Samuel's Birth and Dedication

Read by Loretta Ramstad of Living Grace Lutheran Church, Hawley, MN

1 Samuel 1:2-3a, 4-7

²He [Elkanah] had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. ³Now this man used to go up year by year from his town to worship and to sacrifice to the LORD of hosts at Shiloh, ... ⁴On the day when Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters; ⁵but to Hannah he gave a double portion, because he loved her, though the LORD had closed her womb. ⁶Her rival used to provoke her severely, to irritate her, because the LORD had closed her womb. ⁷So it went on year by year; as often as she went up to the house of the LORD, she used to provoke her. Therefore Hannah wept and would not eat.

1 Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28

...²⁰In due time Hannah conceived and bore a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, "I have asked him of the LORD."

²¹The man Elkanah and all his household went up to offer to the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and to pay his vow. ²²But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, “As soon as the child is weaned, I will bring him, that he may appear in the presence of the LORD, and remain there forever; I will offer him as a nazirite for all time.”

... ²⁴When she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour, and a skin of wine. She brought him to the house of the LORD at Shiloh; and the child was young. ²⁵Then they slaughtered the bull, and they brought the child to Eli. ²⁶And she said, “Oh, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the LORD. ²⁷For this child I prayed; and the LORD has granted me the petition that I made to him. ²⁸Therefore I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he lives, he is given to the LORD.”

She left him there for the LORD.

1 Samuel 2:1-11 Hannah's Prayer

2 Hannah prayed and said, “My heart exults in the LORD; my strength is exalted in my God. My mouth derides my enemies, because I rejoice in my victory. ²“There is no Holy One like the LORD, no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God. ³Talk no more so very proudly, let not arrogance come from your mouth; for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. ⁴The bows of the mighty are broken, but the feeble gird on strength. ⁵Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry are fat with spoil. The barren has borne seven, but she who has many children is forlorn. ⁶The LORD kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up. ⁷**The LORD makes poor and makes rich; he brings low, he also exalts. ⁸He raises up the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap, to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor. For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and on them he has set the world.** ⁹“He will guard the feet of his faithful ones, but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness; for not by might does one prevail. ¹⁰The LORD! His adversaries shall be shattered; the Most High will thunder in heaven. The LORD will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king, and exalt the power of his anointed.”

Message

Pr. Hope Deutscher

Grace and peace to you from our God who knows our hearts and hears our prayers. Amen.

Have you ever wanted something so bad? Have you ever had a dream ...only to never see it come? As a little girl, I had dreamed of getting married and having 2 children.and it never happened. It will never happen. I will never have children of my own. It has been a bitter pill to swallow – while my career as a radio and TV journalist and producer consumed my life, my friends were having babies and raising them into toddlers and young children. When I told one friend I was going to seminary her first words were “now you can find a husband.” That wasn't my goal; maybe it was her goal for my life.

But I hope I have been like Hannah in how I have responded to this and that I have turned to God in prayers for lamenting what could have been, what is and where it will go.

Hannah was married to a man who had 2 wives – that was customary back then. The other wife had children, but Hannah couldn't have children...and was taunted by the second wife because of it. Her husband's comforting only sharpened the pain and heightened her sense of isolation because the Israelites saw children as a particular blessing from the Lord, recognizing his power to open or close a woman's womb. Women who couldn't bear a child were considered inferior. And more than likely, a barren woman also felt they were denied the possibility of being the one chosen to bear the Messiah.

Every year the family would journey from Ramah to worship at the tabernacle in Shiloh...once inside that tabernacle, Hannah would weep and pray to God.

She poured her grief out – O Lord Almighty, if you will only look upon your servant’s misery and remember me and give me a son then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life and no razor will come upon his head.

Unfortunately, as she prayed her lips moved but words were not audible so the priests and others assumed she was drunk. Questioned by the priest, she replied “I was pouring my soul out to the Lord. Do not take your servant for a wicked woman; I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief.”

She was like a number of women in scripture who were barren. Just last week, we heard how Sarah laughed when she was told she would finally have a son; but Hannah took her pain directly to God. She is considered a woman of faith – not because she sought God when she was in her deepest distress, but because she realized that only God could answer her questions and that only he could provide the consolation and purpose in her life she so desperately was seeking.

In this misunderstanding of being drunk, she could have turned her sorrow on herself or others, become bitter, hopeless, or vindictive. But instead of responding in kind to the misunderstandings in the tabernacle or the taunting by her husband’s other wife, she poured her soul out to God ... and God graciously answered her prayers.

The next morning as Hannah and her husband Elkanah returned to their home 16 miles away, she conceived a son who she named Samuel.

Hannah became the mother of three more sons and two daughters. And more than a thousand years later, Hannah’s great prayer was echoed by Mary, the mother of Jesus as she expressed her praise:

My heart rejoices in the Lord; in the Lord my horn is lifted high.

My mouth boasts over enemies, for I delight in your deliverance. ...

The Lord sends poverty and wealth; he humbles and he exalts.

He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap.

May hearts rejoice in OUR Lord – who is with us in our pains, our sorrows and joys in life. May our hearts rejoice that even in our deepest, darkest moments of life and disappointments – instead of pouring out our heart to everyone else, we should pour our hearts out to God, who knows what’s in our hearts – making him our first resort...not the last. And the Almighty God, gathers us in his arms and gives us grace to trust his strength and wisdom, which is more than we can ever imagine. Amen.

Litany of Thanksgiving

We give thanks to God for the many ways that women have proclaimed the gospel, including as pastors for the past 50 years and for the impact that proclamation has had on more people than we can ever count on.

We rejoice and give thanks to God.

For the ways in which women and men have joined together with the Holy Spirit to push God’s church in new directions; for the distinctive gifts we all bring from our cultures, gender and beyond.

We rejoice and give thanks to God.

For the ministries of the church that are led by women and are for women – from the Women of the ELCA to our circles and mutual ministry Bible and book study groups.

We rejoice and give thanks to God.

For the rich stories of women in scripture – for the apostolic witness of Mary Magdalene, the laughter of Sarah at giving birth in her old age, the prayer of Hannah and Mary, the witness of Joanna and the other women at the tomb, the hospitality of Lydia, the discipleship of Dorcas and the faithfulness of all our Biblical foremothers.

We rejoice and give thanks to God.

Gracious and living God, we rejoice and give thanks for your strength on display throughout time and place calling a variety of people to be witnesses to your grace and power. We celebrate how the church has been blessed by women and girls serving in a variety of roles in the church. Guide us, as your people, to welcome all teachers among us that we may be open to hearing God's story and Christ's good news through them. With Gratitude, we rejoice and give thanks, O God. Amen.

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.

Offering Prayer

Generous God, we thank you for calling us and claiming us as your own. Because there is so much more we can become, and so much more we can do, we pray that our faith will be greater than fear – and in doing that, our discipline of giving and generosity will increase...and that our joy in believing and trusting you will encourage others as we share your riches with them. Amen.

Children's Message

Andrea Keene, GPR Youth Director

Hymn of the Month – *For The Beauty of the Earth* (ELW 879 / LBW 879)

Pam Aakre, Piano, Pr. Hope Deutscher, Flute

Pr. Jim Greene, Narrator

Verse 1: For the beau-ty of the earth, for the beau-ty of the skies,
For the love which from our birth o-ver and a-round us lies:

Refrain: Christ, our God, to thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise.

Verse 2: For the won-der of each hour of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale and tree and flow'r, sun and moon and stars of light: REFRAIN

Verse 3: For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de-light,
For the mys-tic har-mo-ny link-ing sense to sound and sight: REFRAIN

Verse 4: For the joy of hu-man love, broth-er, sis-ter, par-ent, child,
Friends on earth and friends a-bove; for all gen-tle thoughts and mild: REFRAIN

Verse 5: For each per-fect gift of thine, peace on earth and joy in heav'n;
For thy-self, best gift di-vine, to our world so free-ly giv'n: REFRAIN

Scripture: Matthew 14: 22 - 33

Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. ²³And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. ²⁵And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. ²⁶But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. ²⁷But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." ²⁸Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." ²⁹He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. ³⁰But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" ³¹Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying

to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" ³²When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Message and Virtual Communion

Pr. Jim Greene

Some mornings we get up and can feel frustrated by how we look . . . BUT imagine what we'd look like without a skeleton (ponder that for a moment- not having a skeleton! Yikes!)

Our skeleton helps us live, move, & have structure! While we can't "see" our skeleton, we know it's real by how we live, move, & have "structure"!

Faith is a lot like our skeleton. Just as we all have a skeleton, we all have faith. Faith is what helps us live, move, and have structure in our lives. FAITH can mean belief in God AND Faith can mean believing something is real even though we can't/don't see it. I have faith that Mary & Joseph were real people even though I've never seen them. I have faith my car is where I last left it. I have faith the sun is in the sky even on a cloudy day.

Faith is our skeleton and faith, like our skeleton needs to be fed, used, and taken care of in order for both to be of help to us.

The Matthew reading - often entitled "Jesus walking on water" is a Faith story which can help us live, move, and have structure in life.

SIDEBAR: We feed our faith by asking questions of the bible, trusting God will help us benefit from the skeleton of the faith story. **SO Let's practice:** Jesus- after he and the disciples fed the 5,000: why did he:

- Makes the disciples get into the boat & go ahead to the other side?
- GO up the mountain by himself to pray AND what/who did he pray for?
- WHY did he walk on water during a storm?
- WHY were the disciples more frightened by Jesus then the storm?
- WHAT was important about the words that were spoken by Jesus/Peter?
- WHAT does the storm, the boat, the disciples, and the words represent?

What other questions can you ask? Faith invites us to be curious!

- Is the storm: the Pandemic; The anger of who's right on the issues?
- Is the boat: the way things used to be; is it our new normal; or are the waves our lack of faith or our fears or our frustration at uncertainty?
- Is faith's skeleton = "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid" AND "Come"!
- Is faith's skeleton = Sensing God is here even in the midst of our storms?
- How about this: When I welcome Jesus into the boat- do the storms naturally calm down?

Having a skeleton doesn't mean our body won't struggle or that we'll do everything perfectly. Having faith doesn't mean we won't struggle yet as we continue to feed our faith we can live, move, and find structure with the help of God through all the storms and calm times in life with Jesus always inviting us to "come to God!"

What is the boat we're sitting in; what kind of storms do we see; do we trust God is able to calm the storm?

How are we feeding our skeleton AND how are we feeding our faith?

May we trust God is working inside us to help us grow a deeper faith. Amen

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

Creator God, you blessed us with a variety of gifts which we can see like the earth, the sky, and each other. You also provided us with a whole host of gifts which we can't see like our inner workings, our skeleton, and our soul. As a way to connect to these you provide us with a faith which helps us to be able to live, move, and have structure as we learn to look at life through your eyes. Guide us to nurture everything you have blessed us with; everything we can see and especially what we can't see. LORD, IN YOUR MERCY HEAR OUR PRAYER

Jesus, educate us through the storms of life to fully rely on you. When the waters of life are calm, guide us to appreciate the many gifts we have and to do our best to be grateful. When the storms of life hit us, guide us to focus on you as you help us through the storm. Remind us to keep our eyes on you as we step out of the boat and walk like you. LORD, IN YOUR MERCY HEAR OUR PRAYER

Holy Spirit, remind us how we strengthen our skeleton of faith by asking questions and listening for your direction. May we trust in our hearts how both Jesus and you are constantly praying for us to do the best we can through every situation. Help us to learn from every time we sink, noticing how you're always available to lift us up. LORD, IN YOUR MERCY HEAR OUR PRAYER

Gracious God, open our eyes to the fact of how you've blessed us with a skeleton and so much more. May we walk by faith and not just by sight as we live out the prayer Jesus taught us to pray:

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. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. 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

Hear again and take to heart these words from an old hymn: "O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come, Our shelter from the stormy blast, And our eternal home." May these words give structure our faith like a skeleton does our body as we move forward to discover ways to celebrate, share, and show God's love.

Hymn – When Peace, like a River/It is Well With My Soul (ELW #785 / LBW 346)

Pam Aakre, Piano; Pr. Hope Deutscher, Flute

*Verse 1: When peace like a riv-er at-tend-eth my way, when sor-rows like sea bil-lows roll,
What-ev-er my lot, though hast taught me to say, it is well, it is well, with my soul.*

Refrain: It is well....with my soul, ...it is well, it is well with my soul.

*Verse 2: Though Sa-tan should buf-fet, though tri-als should come,
let this blest as-sur-ance con-trol, that Christ hath re-gard-ed my help-less es-tate,
and hath shed his own blood for my soul. REFRAIN*