

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 30, 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: *I Love Your Kingdom, Lord*

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.*
 - *Monday evenings (every 2 weeks): Paul Tillich Bible Study (hosted by Joe Hass)*
 - *Wednesdays at 10 AM: Luke Bible Study*
 - *Wednesdays at 7 PM: 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)*

If you missed any of the stories, you can watch them on the Living Grace website (www.livinggracehawley.org).

- *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: Sunday, September 13th at 9:30 AM on the lawn of Rollag Lutheran Church. We hope to have a recording of our last service available online soon. 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.*
- *Sunday during our August 16th Outdoor Worship Service we "Filled the Pickups" With food, household items and cash for Barnesville and REACH of Hawley's Food Pantries. We had a \$500 matching donation – and thanks to ALL of you we were able to take pickup loads of much needed items to Barnesville and Hawley...and hand these two wonderful organizations \$613 in cash! Your generosity is unbelievable – thank you for caring for your neighbors!*
- *Smart Team Update: 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 and Tabitha Hass have also joined this Smart Team, which is evaluating and discussing how and when we can safely worship inside our buildings.*
 The SMART Team met on August 18th to discuss the opportunities for fall youth programming and worship services. Following the discussion, the team gave the following recommendations to the Parish Council, which unanimously approved them on August 20th.
 - Youth Programming: We'll let the first few weeks of school occur and re-evaluate. During September, we'll provide online content and meet outside in person for specific events. We'll also model what the Hawley and Barnesville Schools are doing regarding in-person vs. distance learning.
 - Worship and other gatherings:
 - We welcome outdoor worship services, events, meetings and classes – if they can be done safely.
 - Encourage anyone who is feeling ill or showing COVID-related signs/symptoms to not attend in-person church activities.
 - We'll follow the synod recommendations of not holding indoor worship services until all can safely worship.
 - Continue with outdoor services (weather permitting), online worship services, and other online opportunities.
 The SMART Team will meet again on September 22nd, evaluating how the schools are doing and make appropriate updated recommendations to the Parish Council. In the meantime, our congregations continue to prepare for accommodating indoor worship. (See letter from GPR Parish Council President Chad Mickelson at www.gprparish.org.)
- *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 concludes the 5-week sermon series Celebrating Women in the Bible as she introduces us to Dorcas, who is the only woman in scripture designated as a*

disciple, although the presence of women in groups with the disciples is implied at times.

- o Today Pastor Jim shares about Jesus bringing a time of resurrection through every difficulty we have.

As we light the Christ candle, let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship.

(LIGHT CHRIST CANDLE)

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

Pam Aakre, Piano, Pr. Hope Deutscher, Flute

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 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*

Confession and Forgiveness

We are God's people – called to be disciples – united as one in Christ. We are no longer Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female – but called by Christ and welcomed into a new life.

We come before God and each other to confess our sins...known and unknown:

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 right ways of being –Ways of welcome, 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.

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 to a new life and new living in Jesus Christ. Rejoice and be glad, yours is the kingdom of God. Amen.

Celebrating Women in Scripture: Dorcas (Acts 9:36-43)

Dorcas, who lived in Joppa, a town on the Mediterranean coast, belonged to one of the earliest Christian congregations. The presence of women in groups of disciples is implied at times, but Dorcas is the only woman in scripture to be honored with the designation of disciple.

Scripture: Acts 9:36-43 – Dorcas

Read by Tabitha Hass, member of Rollag Lutheran Church, Hawley, MN

³⁶ Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. ³⁷ At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. ³⁸ Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, "Please come to us without delay."

³⁹ So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. ⁴⁰ Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, "Tabitha, get up." Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat

up. ⁴¹ He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. ⁴² This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. ⁴³ Meanwhile he stayed in Joppa for some time with a certain Simon, a tanner.

Message

Pr. Hope Deutscher

Thank you to Tabitha Hass for reading Dorcas' story.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Thirty-five miles northwest of Jerusalem, along the Mediterranean coast, was Joppa...and in this town was one of the earliest Christian congregations. In this faith community is Dorcas - the only woman in scripture to be honored with the designation of disciple. At times the presence of women in groups of disciples is implied, but Tabitha is the only woman specifically called a disciple.

In Greek and English, the word *disciple* has roots in the verbs that mean "to learn." Those 2 verbs describe the activity of the disciples in the New Testament. A disciple is first and foremost – a learner. The disciples sat at Jesus' feet, listening and soaking up the knowledge and wisdom of Christ as he talked to them and to the crowds that also gathered around him. While Jesus taught his disciples many things, - his teachings could be summed up in his command to love God and love one another. As disciples, they put into practice all of his teachings.

Secondly, a disciple is a follower. The disciples followed Jesus wherever he went. ...the word follow doesn't mean to just being willing to walk along with the teacher, but it means willing to – and actually adopting the views and way of life of the teacher. That meant leaving family and jobs to follow Jesus.

A true disciple, Dorcas had learned of Jesus and had decided to follow him. She adopted his views and his lifestyle.

So we hear a few lines in scripture of how important Dorcas' ministry is, enough to be called disciple....and it is not only in being raised from the dead but also her acts of kindness, generosity, and willingness to go out of her way to offer help to others, that God is glorified.

She didn't do BIG million dollar things to glorify God; she did small acts of kindness for the people around her that were hungry, hurting and in need of a loving hand.

In some ways Dorcas becoming the first Mother Theresa, if you will – ministering to the poor.

During her lifetime Mother Teresa became famous as the Catholic nun who dedicated her life to caring for the destitute and dying in the slums of Calcutta. *Mother Theresa once said: "We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop."*

What is the "drop" that you – that we – are doing to make a difference as disciples of Jesus? As a pastor, I am blessed to hear of all the ways churches and individuals are making a difference- sharing harvests of produce to neighbors, two weeks ago we collected food and household items and a generous donation for REACH and Barnesville Food Pantries. We've provided milk money to youth in Hawley, we've collected items women, men and children who don't have personal care items or purses...we've created quilts to provide warmth and love to our brothers and sisters in need. Together – we are filling the world with drops of love. But you are also asked to drop love wherever God has planted you.

Let us pray – O God, may the power of the Holy Spirit send us to places of need so that we might follow in the footsteps of Dorcas and Mother Theresa in using our gifts and drops of love to our brothers and sisters in need. May we open our hearts and eyes to see what those needs are around us...and may we respond with generous hearts following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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.*

Dorcas: *Lord, hear our praise of Dorcas
Who served the sick and poor.
Her hands were cups of kindness,
Her heart an open door.
Send us, O Christ, your Body,
Where people cry in pain,
And teach them with compassion
To make them whole again.*

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.*

Children’s Message

Andrea Keene, GPR Youth Director

Gospel: Matthew 16:21-28

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. ²²And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.” ²³But Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.” ²⁴Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ²⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. ²⁶For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life? ²⁷“For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. ²⁸Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

Message

Pr. Jim Greene

At a wedding of a co-worker from the treatment center I worked at before coming to the GPR Parish- I was intrigued by the groom’s reaction during the message. The Pastor shared, “Marriage will be work and there will be times when the two of you won’t agree . . .” as he said this I visibly saw the groom

shake his head “No!” The Pastor interrupted his sermon by looking at the groom and saying, “Yes, marriage is work and Yes you will disagree!” Powerful statement and wake up call!

Peter, like the groom, didn’t want to hear that being a disciple was going to be work and that Jesus was going to suffer, die, and rise again. I wonder if Peter understood any part of what Jesus was saying? I’ve wondered how this section might have been written if Peter, instead of telling Jesus “this can’t happen”, would have asked, “I don’t understand- could you explain what you mean?” Irregardless of what might have happened, what we have is Peter “the rock” becoming Peter the stumbling block. Who wouldn’t like to skip the difficult parts of life and only experience the good?

What’s been difficult about life for us lately? Fear of getting Covid; anger at the governor; stay at home orders; people wearing or not wearing masks; social distancing; everything being cancelled; not feeling we have any real direction? Maybe what is difficult is our forgetting, like Peter seemed to do, how Jesus says there will be suffering and death AND resurrection! Can our resurrection be learning or relearning healthy habits through this time?

What are some helpful habits we’ve been invited to learn or relearn? A slower pace of life; treasuring the times we get to see each other; making time to enjoy the world around us; maybe cleaning up the space we live in; taking more walks; slowing down?

When Jesus says, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me” he’s not saying “life’s a pain and then you’ll die!” Rather, Jesus is saying, “no matter what happens in your life, if you let go of all that causes you to stumble, you will see I am the rock who is always with you!” The meaning of life is a gift which is opened anew every day.

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.

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](https://www.livinggracehawley.org) or [gprparish.org](https://www.gprparish.org) for specific information.

Prayers

Children of God, thank you for remembering the church with your offerings. Please remember our fellow members with your prayers, a phone call or text, and a helping hand when possible and safe. Lift up all who struggle in our world and pray for the gift of healing... Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Gracious God, in the midst of this Pandemic it is easy to strike out and blame you, the government, and anyone who sees the world a little or a lot differently than we do. Just as you created the world by

your word, with a word create in us the ability to do what is helpful, necessary, and kind for each other. Open our hearts to how you always want to help, guide, and care for us. Help us when we want to strike out to pause and make a better choice. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Dear suffering, crucified, and risen Christ, may we notice how struggles are a part of everyone's life, making ourselves miserable is optional. While you took up your cross you did so trusting your actions would benefit all people. May we not cause harm to ourselves or others and yet, may we not run from the struggles which can be a part of our journey. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Dear Holy Spirit, be our Diving Inner Voice which helps us to ask the questions we need to ask; to face the issues we need to face; and to not make life harder on ourselves or others by believing we're all on our own. Help us to see the ways you show us you are with us and are helping us.

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

Children of God, may we hear these words as true:

No matter what struggles and difficulties we face in our lives

The Lord is always with us to bless us and keep us.

The Lord is always with us to show us the way.

The Lord will provide for us a way through every difficulty and to help us let go of what doesn't help and to resurrect ways to find God's peace.

Hymn – Built on a Rock (ELW 652 / LBW 365)

Pam Aakre, Piano; Pr. Hope Deutscher, Flute

Verse 1: *Built on a rock the church shall stand, e-ven when stee-ples are
Fall-ing; crum-bled have spires in ev-'ry land, bells still
Are chim-ing and call-ing – call-ing the young and old to rest, call-ing the
Souls of those dis-tressed, long-ing for life ev-er-last-ing.*

Verse 3: *Christ builds a house of liv-ing stones; we are his own hab-i-ta-tion;
He fills our hearts, his hum-ble thrones, grant-ing us life and sal-va-tion.
Where two or three will seek his face, he in their midst will show his grace,
Bless-ings up-on them be-stow-ing.*

Verse 5: *Through all the pass-ing years, O Lord, grant that, when church bells are ring-ing,
man-y may come to hear your Word, who here this prom-ise is bring-ing:
"I know my own, my own know me; you, not the world, my face shall see;
My peace I leave with you. A-men."*