

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, December 27, 2020

First Sunday of Christmas – Virtual Holy Communion Worship Service
Led by Pr. Hope Deutscher, Pr. Jim Greene, and Andrea Keene
Music Provided by: Pam Aakre, Piano and Pr. Hope Deutscher, Flute

Welcome everyone to worship on this 1st Sunday after Christmas- a Christmas celebration that, while different than anything we've done before, is still a celebration of the birth of a Child whose life, death, and resurrection gave us a freedom we couldn't have achieved on our own.

Happening This Week:

No Wednesday activities.

Friday, January 1, 2021: Happy New Year!

Welcome/Announcements

- Welcome to worship for the GPR Parish and Living Grace Lutheran. Today, we come to you from a variety of locations.
- We invite you to subscribe to our YouTube channel – Rollag Lutheran Church
- Pastoral Care: Pastor Jim Greene and Pastor Hope Deutscher 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 youth.
- **SMART Team/Worshipping Update:** With increasing numbers and guidance from the state, at this time we are doing creative worship services. Our Councils and Smart Team are working together to keep us safe, watching the guidelines and numbers to prepare safe ways for us to be together when and how it is safe to do so.
- **Bible and Book Studies:**
 - *Wednesdays at 10 AM: Bible Study (Studying Ephesians)*
 - *First and Third Mondays @ 7 pm (Next one January 4) Women's Book Study: It's Not Supposed to be This Way: Finding Unexpected Strength When Disappointments leave you shattered by Lysa Terkeurst. Contact Pr. Hope for Zoom log-in details!*

- Please watch for the next GPR newsletter for updates on worship, Annual meetings, and a variety of programs (and not all of them will be on Zoom) coming up to help us in our Spiritual Journey as we leave 2020 behind and enter into 2021!
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- **Notes about today's service:**
 - *A Large print bulletin is available on our websites for you to use during worship.*
 - *During our service, we have the following supplies reading:*
 - *Bread/crackers and wine/juice* available for partaking in *Virtual Holy Communion.*
 - *Music provided by Pam Aakre and Pr. Hope Deutscher, and Sam Helgeson.*
 - *We are grateful for youth and their participation in our service. Andrea will have a children's sermon.*
 - Today we hear Paul reminding us how we have a freedom given to us from God so we can be of help to each other AND We hear from Luke reminding us of Jesus being presented to God and to wonderful and wise people blessing Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.
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Prelude: *He Is Born* Pam Aakre, Piano

Welcome

Confession & Forgiveness

I have before you my good friend "Humble the Helpful Elephant"! A gift given to me to help me be honest with God, myself, and others. There is a story which talks about an Elephant in the living room with the Elephant being the parts of our lives we'd rather not look at- and when we deny them or try to cover them up- they only get bigger. I keep Humble beside my desk to help me know I don't have to live my life hiding anything from God- which is why we continue now with the Confession:

Confession: Gracious God, you see and know everything and you never stop looking for ways to help us. We confess we have tried to live life on our own like a stubborn mule believing what we do only affects us. Help us to open our heart, soul, and mind to you and to invite you to cleanse us from every thought, word, and action which has infected us and hurt our relationship with you, others, and ourselves. Help us to live in the light of your love and not under the dark cloud of sin.

Our loving and forgiving God sent Jesus into our lives to help us live life with eyes wide open, with hearts unburdened by the elephant of sin, and to be free to celebrate, share, and show God's love. May we entrust our whole self into God's hands as we leave 2020 and enter 2021 with the confidence of better days ahead as we all work together.

Hymn: *What Child Is This?* (ELW 296 / LBW 40)

Pam Aakre, Piano; Pr. Hope Deutscher, Flute

Verse 1: *What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king, whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!*

Children's Message

Andrea Keene, GPR Youth Director

Psalm 148

¹Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise God in the heights.

²**Praise the LORD, all you angels; sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.**

³Praise the LORD, sun and moon; sing praise, all you shining stars.

⁴**Praise the LORD, heaven of heavens, and you waters above the heavens.**

⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD, who commanded, and they were created,

⁶**who made them stand fast forever and ever, giving them a law that shall not pass away.**

⁷Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps;

⁸**fire and hail, snow and fog, tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**

⁹mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars;

¹⁰**wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds;**

¹¹sovereigns of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the world;

¹²**young men and maidens, old and young together.**

¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD, whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.

¹⁴**The LORD has raised up strength for the people and praise for all faithful servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near the LORD. Hallelujah!**

Scripture: Luke 2:22-40 - *Jesus Is Presented in the Temple*

²²When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word;

³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

³³And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

Message: Pr. Hope Deutscher

Contact Pr. Hope Deutscher at hdeutscher@gmail.com if you would like a transcript of the sermon.

Receiving of Offering

Offering Prayer: Gracious God, you came to us as one unknown, bringing joy and salvation to the earth. Nourish us at your banquet table, that with all who welcome your birth we may proclaim your peace, revealed in Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

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: *Your little ones Dear Lord* (ELW 286)

Pam Aakre, Piano; Pr. Hope Deutscher, Flute

Verse 1: *Your lit-tle ones, dear Lord, are, we, and come your low-ly bed to see;
En-light-en ev-'ry soul and mind, that we the way to you may find.*

Verse 3: *Oh, draw us whol-ly to you, Lord, and to us all your grace ac-cord;
True faith and love to us im-part, that we may hold you in our heart.*

Scripture: Galatians 4:4-7: But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. 6 And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" 7 So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Message: Pr. Jim Greene

Contact Pastor Jim at revjamesgreene18@yahoo.com. if you want a transcript of this sermon.

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.

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

Prayers

God, from the beginning we are created in your image- obviously not physically, but from the inside out. Help us not to worship the artificial differences in our world. Guide us to work together with all our gifts as we take care of this world and life with an attitude of intimacy with you, others, and ourselves. LORD IN YOUR MERCY HEAR OUR PRAYER

Lord Jesus, your life, death, and resurrection is meant to be life affirming and transforming. Not only did you come into the world, you also infiltrate the lives of wise people like Simeon and Anna and all those people who have encouraged us to trust you and to use the gifts we've been blessed with. Your life showed us how to connect with God; Your death showed us how to believe in God; and your resurrection showed us how nothing can separate us from God's love. LORD IN YOUR MERCY HEAR OUR PRAYER

Comforting Holy Spirit, we ask for your inspiration to help us through the rough times of life; your prayers to provide us the wisdom we need; and your quiet presence to help us to patiently listen for guidance when we'd rather rush in and fix life in our image. Help us trust

that we will be able to get back together safely in the near future and to do whatever we need to be a help to all. LORD IN YOUR MERCY HEAR OUR PRAYER

Triune God, we give you thanks for those people who have encouraged us to grow closer to you. We ask your healing touch be with all who struggle, are hurting, and who grieve. We trust your presence will continue to help us as we learn to see life through your eyes instead of through the eyes of anger, fear, and resentment. Strengthen and encourage us now as we remember how you 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

The manger is empty as the Christ Child has entered our hearts, our communities, and our world to free us to truly see we're all part of the family as we learn to serve one another as Jesus so freely served us. May we live with an attitude of intimacy with God our Creator, Redeemer, and Comforter as we Celebrate, Share, and Show God's love. AMEN

Hymn: Hark the Herald Angels Sing (ELW 270 / LBW 60)

Pam Aakre, Piano; Sam Helgeson, Trumpet

During the hymn we invite you to share in Holy Communion with the members of your household.

- Verse 1:** *Hark! The Herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;
With angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"*
- Refrain:** *Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"*
- Verse 2:** *Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the God-head see! Hail, incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel!*
- Refrain:** *Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"*