**Gran-Park-Rollag Parish and Living Grace Lutheran Church**

***In ministry partnership since 2017***

***Gran-Park-Rollag Parish Living Grace Lutheran Church***

*3 Churches – 1 Ministry: Energized by God A worshipping community of the ELCA focused on*

*To celebrate, share & show God’s love making known God’s love and grace by:*

10501 Hwy. 32 South, Hawley, MN 56549-8929 *Welcoming Everyone, Sharing Jesus’ story,*

Office Phone: 937-5499  *Growing in faith and Serving beyond ourselves.*

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***Sunday, October 11, 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***

*In Jesus’ parable about a great banquet, those invited do not come, so the invitation is extended to others. In our liturgy God spreads a table before us. Even amid anxiety and hardship we rejoice in the peace of God which surpasses all understanding. With great joy we feast at the table of the Lord, and we go forth to share the wonderful invitation with others hungering and thirsting for the abundant life of God.*

**Prelude: *Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Me* Pam Aakre, Piano**

**Welcome/Announcements**

* *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.*
* *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!*
* *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.*
* *SMART Team/Worshipping Update: Our worshipping communities are working on Business Plans to reopen, when it is safe to do so, and when we are prepared to do so following MN Department of Health guidelines. The Smart Team will meet this Monday to continue conversations.*
* *Connect Through Bible and Book Studies!*   
  *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 (led by Joe Hass)*
  + *Wednesdays at 10 AM: Luke Joel Study*
  + *First and Third Mondays @ 7 pm, starting October 19th: 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! We will meet the first and third Mondays via Zoom.*
* *Notes about today’s service:*
  + *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’s message: who will you invite to dinner?
  + Today Pr. Jim message: Being of the same mind as the Lord.

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

**(LIGHT CHRIST CANDLE)**

**Hymn of the Month: *Listen, God is Calling (ELW 513 / WOV 712)***

**Pam Aakre, Piano; Pr. Hope Deutscher, Flute**

**Refrain:** *Lis-ten, lis-ten, God is call-ing, through the Word in-vit-ing,*

*Of-fer-ing for-give-ness, com-fort, and joy.*

**Verse 1:** *Je-sus gave his man-date: share the good news*

*That he came to save us and set us free.* REFRAIN

**Verse 2:** *Let none be for-got-ten through-out the world,*

*In the tri-une name of God go and bap-tize.* REFRAIN

**Verse 3:** *Help us to be faith-ful, stand0ing stead-fast,*

*Walk-ing in your pre-cepts, led by your Word.* REFRAIN

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

**Confession & Forgiveness**

May we open our hearts and minds to be fully present to God’s understanding presence as we give over to God all which distracts us and welcome in God’s grace, love, and forgiveness.

**Gracious God, instead of standing firm in the Lord, we have become wishy washy by letting our fears and confusion rule our thoughts, words, and actions. Instead of being a welcoming presence inviting people to the table of the Lord, we have let our anger and suspicions push people away. Forgive us Lord for every distraction which leads us away from you; every word spoken in haste or malice; and every action which has caused harm to others or ourselves. Forgive us and help us to begin anew today.**

Children of God, we are all created in the image of God and, while we won’t always see eye to eye with God or others, may we remember God looks upon us with a desire to have us stand firm in faith and to do God’s work with our hands. Remember, it is always God’s desire to guide, forgive, and transform us into more loving and caring people. May God’s forgiveness help us to let go of the negativity and to fully receive and share God’s love. Please know this gift of love comes to us 24/7. Amen.

**Psalm 23 – Lay Reader: Joe Pederson, Rollag Lutheran Church**

**Scripture: Philippians 4:1-9**  
1My brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved. 2I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. 3Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.  
 4Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. 5Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. 6Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.  
 8Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. 9Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

**Message Pr. Jim Greene**

When’s the last time you’ve been to a buffet restaurant? Can’t tell you for me. Sometimes we like all the choices and sometimes we just want a simple meat and potatoes meal. Either way, we want to be fed. As we look at the reading from Philippians, it would be easy to see it as a giant buffet of thoughts, ideas, and encouragements from Paul. Instead of trying to bite into every helpful morsel I’m going to lift up some meat, potatoes, and gravy for you to digest.

**The meat**: to stand firm in the Lord by having the same mind as the Lord. Meat provides the protein we need to live and while there are lots of distractions and options in the world- we don’t need anything fancy- we need to be on solid ground. Paul, who is writing from prison and not sure if he’ll live or die, lays out what keeps him grounded: stand firm in the Lord by having the same mind as the Lord. To do this we need to spend time with the Lord listening and learning and practicing what God commands, which in concise terms is: Love God, neighbor, and self in thought, word, & deed.

Meat is wonderful but it can’t be the only thing on the plate- we need the **potatoes** of rejoicing in the Lord to infiltrate our thoughts, words, and deeds. Potatoes are stabilizers on the plate. We’ll live a more stable life if we rejoice and be happy when things go well and rejoice and be grateful as we remember we never face the struggles of life alone.

Meat and potatoes are good but they don’t have to be alone on the plate of our life. **The gravy** which covers the meat of standing firm in the Lord by having the same mind as the Lord AND the potatoes of rejoicing in the Lord always IS the peace of God which surpasses all understanding and guards our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Who doesn’t want peace in their lives? Peace = the ability to trust God does help us through every situation.

A meat and potatoes and gravy meal isn’t fancy but it’s far more filling than a meal of the cotton candy of aggression, sarcasm, and hatred we see too many people eating in the news and social media. May we learn to be filled up with the Lord instead of fooled by hatred, fear, and loathing. See for yourself which is more filling and satisfying. Taste and see the Lord is good!

**Hymn: *Let Us Go Now to the Banquet #523 ELW***

***Pam Aakre, Piano; Pr. Hope Deutscher, Flute***Refrain: *Let us go now to the ban-quet, to the feast of the u-ni-verse.*

*The table’s set and a place is wait-ing; come, ev-‘ry-one, with your gifts to share.*

Verse 1: *I will rise in the ear-ly morn-ing; the com-mu-ni-ty’s wait-ing for me.*

*With a spring in my step I’m walk-ing with my friends and my fam-i-ly.*

Verse 2: *God in-vites all the poor and hun-gry to the ban-uqet of jus-tice and good*

*Where the har-vest will not be hoard-ed so that no one will lack for food.*

Verse 3: *May we build such a place a-mong us where all people are e-qual in love.*

*God has called us to work to-geth-er and to share ev-‘ry-thing we have.*

Refrain: *Let us go now to the ban-quet, to the feast of the u-ni-verse.*

*The table’s set and a place is wait-ing; come, ev-‘ry-one, with your gifts to share.*

### Gospel: Matthew 22:1-14 1Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: 2“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. 3He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. 4Again he sent other slaves, saying, ‘Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.’ 5But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, 6while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. 7The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. 8Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. 9Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.’ 10Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests. 11“But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, 12and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?’ And he was speechless. 13Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ 14For many are called, but few are chosen.”

**Message Pr. Hope Deutscher**

To Watch the Video *Come to the Table* by Sidewalk Prophets:

<https://sidewalkprophets.com/blogs/sidewalk-prophets/119381251-first-post>

or on YOUTUBE: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DXXxLwxfo0U&feature=youtu.be>

*"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." - 1 Cor. 1:3*  
I love the song *“Come to the Table”* By the Sidewalk Prophets. The song lyrics go like this: *We all start on the outside, The outside looking in, This is where grace begins We were hungry, we were thirsty, With nothing left to give, Come to the table* *Come meet this motley crew of misfits, These liars and these thieves There's no one unwelcome here, no, So that sin and shame that you brought with you, You can leave it at the door* a*nd let mercy draw you near…*

As I heard this song this past week on the radio, I was reminded of our gospel text. Like most people I have eaten out with very few people the last several months. As I hear this text, I’m dreaming, wondering and pondering…when the world goes back to a new normal – when we can safely gather in large groups for parties and festivities – who will I invite to my dinner table? Who will I invite to my next birthday party? Or just a party to say we are set free?

We all know the joy of gathering, celebrating, eating and drinking. It’s a common and essential human form of communication that allows us to bond, remember, hope and live. And yet….human feasts are usually exclusionary. When I asked you who you would invite to a gathering – you probably said lots of family and friends. Rarely do we see people open their homes or parties to strangers walking by.

However, Jesus has just told us about an extravagant feast…where ALL people were invited! No special invitation was required to gain access. No one judged whether they were the *thief, or doubter, hero or coward, prisoner or soldier, young, or older, pauper or princess or prince…*They were hungry…and the last invited became the first.   
  
Like the originally invited banquet guests, we can make all sorts of excuses of why we don’t want to invite those we label as *others –* but Jesus gives us the invitation to invite more people than we could imagine!

Songwriters Dave Frey, Ben Glover and Ben McDonald wrote the song *Come to the Table.* As they recorded the song, they thought of the movie *Hook* and in particular the scene where everyone is sitting at a long banquet table bursting with food. And then Peter Pan and Rufio and the young people begin throwing food at each other…Ben Glover says this scene reminded him of the people that God calls – the lost children of God…the feast at the table is for everyone - the thieves, the liars, the doubters, and the sinners.

At God’s table…You are welcome to the table for Holy Communion where we are all fed…whether that be in a church building or right now in your own kitchen or living room. The Table of Holy Communion is a feast for all in food and drink, in bread and wine we celebrate God’s grace, forgiveness, and sacrificial love.

**Virtual Communion**

At this time, we take our bread and remember these words: 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.

*This feast is for all…if you feel you have failed in life – you are forgiven, it is for the dreamers and those who have lost another, those bound by chains are set free All who follow, all who lead, All the lost you have been found, All who've been labeled right or wrong…Come to the table*, *Come join the sinners you have been redeemed, Take your place beside the Savior… you are welcome here.*

The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you.  
  
May you know and remember that you are always welcome at this banquet feast…and may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you forever in the Risen Life of Jesus Christ. Amen.   
*May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, keep your hearts and your minds in Jesus Christ. Amen.*

**Receiving of Offering***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](http://livinggracehawley.org/)*or*[gprparish.org](http://gprparish.org/)*for specific information.*

**Prayers**

Creator God- you have given us the meat, potatoes, and gravy for a wonderful life. Help us to stand firm in you by taking the time to get to know you. Help us to rejoice in all things- thankful for the good; grateful for you help through the difficult times. Help us to get past needing to be right to a place where we let your peace infiltrate every aspect of our lives.

LORD IN YOUR MERCY HEAR OUR PRAYER

Blessed Jesus, you call us to be a welcoming and invitational presence in the world. To see past the differences and to welcome all to your table- learning from our disagreements and growing through compassion for one another. As you demonstrated through your life- it isn’t always easy or comfortable to invite others in, yet, you promise this is the way to make the kingdom of God real in the world.

LORD IN YOUR MERCY HEAR OUR PRAYER

Counseling Holy Spirit, there are many situations in our lives and in our world that are confusing, frustrating, and really get us angry. Unfortunately we have given into our rage and then been perplexed at how poorly we all get along. Inspire us to invest in listening and communicating in wise and thoughtful ways so all may benefit in helpful ways today.

LORD IN YOUR MERCY HEAR OUR PRAYER

Triune God, as COVID-19 drags on we need all of your help in moving forward. As we look to the election of leaders for this country you have blessed us with may we do so with wisdom and a desire to see what we share instead of how we’re different. Guide us all to live with a child like sense of wonder instead of a childish attitude of entitlement. Help us to remember the problem isn’t always THEM! We pray for you grace and wisdom in your name. Amen

**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**

As we live out our Baptism, may we remember how the Lord is here to bless us and keep us; the Lord is with us and makes his face to shine upon us; and how the Lord is with us to give us peace. All this we believe because of how we’re marked in the name of God our Creator, Redeemer, and Comforter. Amen.

**Hymn: *Sent Forth By God's Blessings LBW 221/ELW 547***

**Pam Aakre, Piano, Pr. Hope Deutscher, Flute****Verse 1:**  *Sent forth by God’s bless-ing, our true faith con-fess-ing,*

*The peo-ple of God from this dwell-ing take leave.*

*The sup-per is end-ed. Oh, now be-eex-tend-ed*

*The fruits of this ser-vice in all who be-lieve.*

*The seed of Christ’s teach-ing, re-cep-tive souls reach-ing,*

*Shall blos-som in ac-tion for God and for all.*

*Your grace shall in-cite us, your love shall u-nite us*

*to work for your king-dom and an-swer your call.*