

# *Spirit of Grace* ELCA UMC



March 27th, 2022  
*Fourth Sunday in Lent*

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Prelude

Welcome

An Interfaith Call to Peace for Ukraine

Oh Divine,  
**most mighty, most merciful, our sacred stories tell us  
that you help and save your people.**  
**You are the fortress: may there be no more war.**  
**You are the harvest: may there be no more hunger.**  
**You are the light: may no one die alone or in despair.**  
**Oh Divine, most majestic, most motherly, grant us your life. Amen.**

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Call to Worship

The Spirit of God that breathes us into life, whispers: Come home.  
**We come home to the open arms of Love.**  
We come as we are.  
**We come with joy.**  
We come hungry for nourishment.  
**We come beaten down and burnt out.**  
We come eager to find our place in the whole.  
**We come bringing all of who we are;**  
our grief and our anger  
**our regrets and our longings.**  
We give God thanks, for Christ's welcome is eternal.

## Confession & Forgiveness

In the name of God,  
who makes a way in the wilderness,  
walks with us,  
and guides us in our pilgrimage  
**Amen.**

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Holy One,  
**we confess that we have wandered far from you:  
we have not trusted your promises,  
we have ignored your prophets in our own day,  
we have squandered our inheritance of grace,  
we have failed to recognize you in our midst.**

**Have mercy on us!  
Forgive us and turn us again to you.  
Teach us to follow in your ways,  
assure us again of your love,  
and help us to love our neighbor.  
Amen.**

Beloved in Christ,  
the Word draws near to you,  
and all who call out to God shall be saved.  
In Jesus, † God comes to you again and again  
and gathers you under wings of love.  
In Jesus' name, your sins are forgiven.  
God journeys with you and teaches you how to live in love.  
**Amen.**

## Greeting & Prayer of the Day

The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray.

God of endless Love, you look on us and see every part of ourselves and you love us just the same. Your bountiful forgiveness is everlasting – far beyond human comprehension. Teach us how to look on others - and ourselves - and love in this same way; full of grace and understanding, that we may all join together in your feast of forgiveness. In the name of Christ, who shows us the way.

**Amen.**

## First Reading: 2 Corinthians 5: 16-21

And so from now on, we don't look on anyone in terms of mere human judgment. Even if we did once regard Christ in these terms, that is not how we know Christ now. And for anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation. The old order has passed away; now everything is new!

All of this is from God, who ransomed us through Christ – and made us ministers of that reconciliation. This means that through Christ, the world was fully reconciled again to God, who didn't hold our transgressions against us, but instead entrusted us with this message of reconciliation. This makes us Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making the appeal directly through us.

Therefore we implore you in Christ's name: be reconciled to God. For our sake, God made the One who was without sin to be sin, so that by this means we might become the very holiness of God.

Word of God, Word of Life

**Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm 32

Blessed are you whose wrongdoings  
    have been forgiven,  
    whose shame has been forgotten.  
Blessed are you in whom Love Divine  
    finds a home,  
    and whose spirit radiates truth.

**When I acknowledged not my shortcomings,  
I became ill through all my defenses.  
And day and night, guilt weighed heavy  
constricting my heart;  
My spirit became dry as desert bones.**

I admitted my faults to the Most High,  
and I made known my regret;  
I cried out, "Forgive me, O Comforter,  
for those times I have sinned in  
my thoughts, my words,  
and my deeds;"  
**And the Beloved created within me  
a clean and open heart.**

Therefore, let everything who is sincere  
give thanks to the Beloved;  
**For whenever we feel paralyzed  
by fear,  
we shall be embraced by Love.**  
Dwelling in the Heart of the Beloved,  
we are free from distress,  
free to live more creatively.

**O my Beloved, You are my guide,  
You teach me to walk in the Light.**  
Be watchful of me, counsel me as  
I listen to You in the Silence.  
**I pray for the gifts of inner peace  
and wisdom,  
For the grace to reverence all of Creation.**

Many are the heartaches of those  
separated from Love;  
Steadfast love abides with those  
who surrender their lives into  
the hands of the Beloved.  
**Be glad and rejoice! Let your life  
give witness to Love's Way;  
And shout for joy, all you upright  
of heart!**

Gospel: Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 15th chapter.

Meanwhile, the tax collectors and the “sinners” were all gathering around Jesus to listen to his teaching, at which the Pharisees and the religious scholars murmured, “This person welcomes sinners and eats with them!”

Jesus then addressed this parable to them:

“A man had two sons. The younger of them said to their father, ‘Give me the share of the estate that is coming to me.’ So the father divided up the property between them. Some days later, the younger son gathered up his belongings and went off to a distant land. Here he squandered all his money on loose living.

“After everything was spent, a great famine broke out in the land, and the son was in great need. So he went to a landowner, who sent him to a farm to take care of the pigs. The son was so hungry that he could have eaten the husks that were fodder for the pigs, but no one made a move to give him anything. Coming to his senses at last, he said, ‘How many hired hands at my father’s house have more than enough to eat, while here I am starving! I’ll quit and go back home and say, “I’ve sinned against God and against you; I no longer deserve to be called one of your children. Treat me like one of your hired hands.”’ With that, the younger son set off for home.

“While still a long way off, the father caught sight of the returning child and was deeply moved. The father ran out to meet him, threw his arms around him and kissed him. The son said, ‘I’ve sinned against God and against you; I no longer deserve to be called one of your children.’ But his father said to one of the workers, ‘Quick! Bring out the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and shoes on his feet. Take the calf we’ve been fattening and butcher it. Let’s eat and celebrate! This son of mine was dead and has come back to life. he was lost and now he’s found!’ And the celebration began.

“Meanwhile, the elder son had been out in the field. As he neared the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. He called one of the workers and asked what was happening. The worker answered, ‘Your brother is home, and the fatted calf has been killed because your father has him back safe and sound.’

“The son got angry at this and refused to go in to the party, but his father came out and pleaded with him. The older son replied, ‘Look! For years now I’ve done every single thing you asked me to do. I never disobeyed even one of your orders, yet you never gave me so much as a kid goat to celebrate with my friends. But then this son of yours comes home after going through your money with prostitutes, and you kill the fatted calf for him!’

‘But my child!’ the father said. ‘You’re with me always, and everything I have is yours. But we have to celebrate and rejoice! This brother of yours was dead and has come back to life. He was lost and now he’s found.’”

Word of God for the people of God.  
**Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Rev. Emily E Ewing

Hymn of the Day

Our Father, We Have Wandered - ELW 606  
*verses 1-3*

A New Creed - Statement of Faith of the United Church of Canada

*Please stand as you are able as we confess our faith in God together:*

**We are not alone  
we live in God's world.  
We believe in God:  
who has created and is creating,  
who has come in Jesus,  
the Word made flesh,  
to reconcile and make new,  
who works in us and others  
by the Spirit.  
We trust in God.  
We are called to be the Church:  
to celebrate God's presence,  
to live with respect in Creation,  
to love and serve others,  
to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,  
our redeemer and our hope.  
In life, in death, in life beyond death,  
God is with us.  
We are not alone.  
Thanks be to God. Amen.**

Joys & Concerns

*If you have any joys, concerns, or prayer requests to share, please type them into the comment section of the livestream so that we may lift them up together as a community.*

## Prayers of the People

The Spirit of the Lord is poured out upon us in abundance; so we are bold to pray for the church, the world, and all that God has made.

*A brief silence.*

*Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Lord, send your Spirit in this place,  
Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.*

Jesus formed the disciples in the ways of extravagant mercy and profound welcome. Lead your church to be a community marked by forgiveness, hospitality, and celebration. Send us to transform a world plagued by fear and condemnation  
Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

You make the land to produce a harvest that sustains your entire creation. Equip farmers and farm workers who till the soil. Nourish the earth with ample rainfall and abundant sunshine. Heal grounds tainted by pollution or misuse.  
Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Your love comes to us when a table is set and a feast is prepared. Bless the feeding ministries of this community, especially the staff and volunteers of the FISH Food Bank as they strive to keep food accessible to all people. Bring an end to hunger in our community and around the world.  
Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Hear the cries of those in distress. Send your Spirit of comfort and peace to hold them close and keep them safe. We especially pray for all those who suffer as victims of war and violence across the world. Grant protection to those in Ukraine and surrounding areas, and guide world leaders in their peace-making efforts.  
Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

*Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Lord, send your Spirit in this place,  
Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.*

Since we have such great hope in your promises, O God, we lift these and all of our prayers to you in confidence and faith; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**Amen.**

#### Offering & Offertory Music

*At this time, if you are willing and able, please consider giving to Spirit of Grace Church to support our ongoing ministry. Checks can be mailed to 1140 Tucker Road, Hood River OR, 97031. Online Donations can be made through the link below:*  
[Spirit of Grace Church](#)

*In this time of global crisis, please also consider giving to either of these disaster response organizations as they direct their efforts towards those in Ukraine and Eastern Europe:*

[Lutheran Disaster Response, Eastern Europe Crisis Response](#)

[UMCOR, International Disaster Response and Recovery](#)

#### Thanksgiving for the Word

O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be honor and glory forever.

**Amen.**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

**Announcements (see end of worship bulletin)**

Sending Song: Softly and Tenderly, Jesus is Calling – ELW 608  
verses 1-3

Blessing

You are children of God,  
anointed with the oil of gladness  
and strengthened for the journey.  
Almighty God,  
motherly, majestic, and mighty,  
✠ bless you this day and always.  
**Amen.**

Dismissal

Go in peace. Jesus meets you on the way.  
**Thanks be to God.**

*Spirit of Grace*  
ELCA UAC

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**Church Office Hours**  
**Closed on Fridays**

**Pastor Miranda Bermes-Goller**  
M-W 9-12, or by appointment  
[spiritofgracepastor@gmail.com](mailto:spiritofgracepastor@gmail.com)

**Jennifer Fowler, Office Assistant**  
Mon 9:30-2, Wednesday 9:00-2, Thursday 9:00-2  
[office@hoodriverchurch.com](mailto:office@hoodriverchurch.com)

**Linda Boris, Pastoral Assistant**  
Tuesday 10-1

## Announcements

**SPRC** will meet today following worship at 11:15 on Zoom.

**Spirit of Grace Board of Directors** will gather for a short meeting this Tuesday evening at 7pm on Zoom to attend to the regular business of the church.

### **Grounding - Midweek Lenten Worship & Study**

On Wednesdays in Lent, beginning March 9th, we will gather on Zoom at 6:30pm for a time of worship and study. We will begin with midweek worship using the Holden Evening Prayer service by Marty Haugen. Following the service, those who choose to stay can participate in a time of study using the book "A Grounded Faith: Reconnecting with Creator and Creation in the Season of Lent." This book has daily readings, reflections, and invitations for each day in Lent, beginning on Ash Wednesday and concluding on Easter Sunday. Those interested in participating in this Lenten Study will be asked to obtain a copy and commit to doing the daily readings. On Wednesday evenings, we will come together to discuss what we have each read, experienced, and wondered about in the past week, and find ways to connect and integrate what we are learning into our own faith practices.

### **Community Prayer Vigil for Ukraine**

This **Friday, April 1st, at 5:00pm**, GEM will be hosting a Community Prayer Vigil for Ukraine in downtown Hood River. All are welcome at this interfaith peace vigil as we hold space in our hearts for the victims of war and violence. We will gather by the fountain at Overlook Memorial Park to join in prayer and song. A free will offering will be collected to support humanitarian aid in the region.

**Happy Hands** will start gathering again in the Fellowship Hall on April 4 at 10am.

### **Holy Week & Easter**

The Easter resurrection will be here before we know it!

- For Palm Sunday (April 10th) and Easter Sunday (April 17th), we will have our usual service at 10am.
- For Maundy Thursday, we will host a **Dinner Church Service at 6:00pm** in the Sanctuary. The service will begin with the washing of feet and hands for those who choose to participate. Worship will continue at the dinner table, as we share a simple meal of soup and bread before receiving Communion from one another, remembering the Last Supper Jesus shared with his disciples. The service will conclude with the traditional stripping of the altar.
- There will not be a formal Good Friday service, but the church will be open and Pastor Miranda will be available from 11am-1pm for anyone who wants to come for prayer and contemplation.

## Attributions

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