

# Spirit of Grace

ELCA UMC



May 4th, 2025

*Easter III*

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Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Call to Worship

When the tomb looms large before our eyes,  
remind us, Lord, who we are:

**We are children of the resurrection;  
the place of death will not hold us.**

We are the painters of the rainbows;  
the shadow of death will not daunt us.

**We are the breakers of loaves and fishes;  
the taste of death will not defile us.**

We are the raisers of the dead;  
the power of death will not defy us.

**We are the people of Pentecost;  
the spirit of death will not destroy us!**

God is our refuge and our strength.  
**We gather in the power and promise of resurrection.**

Hymn of the Season

Day of Delight and Beauty Unbounded  
*ACS 933 – verses 1+2*

## Thanksgiving for Baptism

Alleluia! Christ is risen!  
**Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

In the name of † the One  
who was, who is, and who is to come.

**Amen.**

Baptized into Christ's death and resurrection,  
and called to live the baptized life,  
let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

*Water may be poured before or during the thanksgiving.*

Holy God,  
we give you thanks for the waters of baptism,  
waters that make a people your own,  
that restore to wholeness,  
and empower us to be witnesses in your name.  
Baptized into you, O Living One,  
**make us one as you are one.**

We give you thanks for the waters of baptism,  
waters that strengthen believers  
and give new life to beloved servants of your church;  
waters that extend your boundless love  
and cross barriers of our own making.  
Baptized into you, O Living One,  
**make us one as you are one.**

We give you thanks for the waters of baptism,  
waters that open the hearts of believers  
and give a voice in the night to those in captivity;  
waters that set your people on a new path,  
rejoicing in the Spirit's power.  
Baptized into you, O Living One,  
**make us one as you are one.**

Grant us grace, love, and life, O Living ONE,  
that our every day is shaped by these waters  
that give us our very lives in you.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Crucified and Risen One.  
**Amen.**

Centering Hymn

Alleluia! Jesus is Risen!  
*ELW 377 – verses 1-3*

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 resurrection,

In this season of Easter, you remind us of the liberating power of the resurrection, which frees us from our old ways of life and welcomes us into your Beloved Community. When old dichotomies of “us versus them” try to take hold of us, send your Spirit to release us from these bonds and lead us in the ways of your new life. Fill our hearts with the truth of your story, that we might share the truth of your healing, love, and liberation with a worn and weary world. In the name of the Risen Christ we pray.

**Amen.**

First Reading: Acts 9:1-20

Meanwhile, Saul continued to breathe murderous threats against the disciples of Jesus. He had gone up to the high priest and asked for letters, addressed to the synagogues in Damascus, that would authorize him to arrest and take to Jerusalem any followers of the Way that he could find, both women and men.

As he traveled along and was approaching Damascus, a light from the sky suddenly flashed about him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

"Who are you?" Saul asked.

The voice answered, "I am Jesus, and you are persecuting me. Get up now and go into the city, where you will be told what to do." Those traveling with him were speechless. They heard the voice, but could see no one.

Saul got up from the ground unable to see, even though his eyes were open. They had to take him by the hand and lead him into Damascus. For three days he continued to be blind, during which time he ate and drank nothing.

There was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. Christ appeared to him in a vision, saying, "Ananias."

Ananias said, "Here I am."

Then Christ said to him, "Go at once to Straight Street, and at the house of Judah ask for a certain Saul of Tarsus. He is there praying. Saul had a vision that a man named Ananias will come and lay hands on him so that he would recover his sight." But Ananias protested, "I have heard from many sources about Saul and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. He is here now with authorization from the chief priests to arrest everybody who calls on your name." Christ said to Ananias, "Go anyway. Saul is the instrument I have chosen to bring my Name to Gentiles, to rulers, and to the people of Israel. I myself will show him how much he will have to suffer for my name."

With that Ananias left. When he entered the house, he laid his hands on Saul, saying, "Saul, my brother, I have been sent by Jesus Christ, who appeared to you on the way here, to help you recover your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he regained his sight. He got up and was baptized, and his strength returned after he had eaten some food.

Saul stayed with the believers in Damascus for a few days, and soon began proclaiming in the synagogues that Jesus was the Only Begotten of God.

Word of God, Word of Life

**Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 30

I praise you, O God, because you raised me up  
and kept my enemies from gloating over me.

**I cried to you for help, YHWH my God,  
and you healed me.**

You brought me back from the realm of the dead, YHWH;  
you spared me from going down into the Pit.

**Sing to YHWH, you who love God!**

**Praise God's Holy Name!**

YHWH's anger is fleeting,  
but God's favor endures forever.

**There may be tears during the night,  
but joy comes in the morning.**

When I presumed I was secure, I boasted,  
"I will never be defeated!"

**When I stood in your favor, YHWH,  
I stood as firm as a mountain.**

**But then you hid yourself from me,  
and I was filled with terror.**

So I called to you, YHWH,

I pleaded for your help:

**"What good will come from my destruction,  
from my going to the grave?**

Does dust praise you, YHWH?

Can the dead proclaim your unfailing goodness?

**Hear me, YHWH, and be merciful!**

**Help me, YHWH!"**

Then you changed my despair into a dance —  
you stripped me of my death shroud  
and clothed me in joy.

**That's why my heart sings to you,  
that's why I can't keep silent —**

**YHWH, you are my God,  
and I will thank you forever!**

## Gospel: John 21:1-19

The Holy Gospel according to John, the 21st chapter.

Later Jesus again was manifested to the disciples at Lake Tiberias. This is how the appearance took place.

Assembled were Simon Peter, Thomas “the Twin,” Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, Zebedee’s children, and two other disciples. Simon Peter said to them, “I’m going out to fish.”

“We’ll join you,” they replied, and went off to get into their boat.

All through the night they caught nothing. Just after daybreak, Jesus was standing on the shore, though none of the disciples knew it was Jesus. He said to them, “Have you caught anything, friends?”

“Not a thing,” they answered.

“Cast your net off to the starboard side,” Jesus suggested, “and you’ll find something.”

So they made a cast and caught so many fish that they couldn’t haul the net in.

Then the disciple whom Jesus loved cried out to Peter, “It’s the Teacher!”

Upon hearing this, Simon Peter threw on his cloak – he was naked – and jumped into the water.

Meanwhile the other disciples brought the boat to the shore, towing the net full of fish. They were not far from land – no more than a hundred yards. When they landed, they saw that a charcoal fire had been prepared, with fish and some bread already being grilled. “Bring some of the fish you just caught.” Jesus told them. Simon Peter went aboard and hauled ashore the net, which was loaded with huge fish – one hundred fifty-three of them. In spite of the great number, the net was not torn.

“Come and eat your meal,” Jesus told them.

None of the disciples dared to ask, “Who are you?” – they knew it was the savior. Jesus came over, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This marked the third time that Jesus had appeared to the disciples after being raised from the dead.

When they had eaten their meal, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon ben-John, do you love me more than these?"

Peter said, "Yes, Rabbi, you know that I'm your friend."

Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

A second time Jesus put the questions, "Simon ben-John, do you love me?"

Peter said, "Yes, Rabbi, you know that I'm your friend."

Jesus replied, "Tend my sheep."

A third time Jesus asked, "Simon ben-John, do you love me as a friend would?"

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked, "Do you love me?" a third time. So he said, "You know everything, Rabbi. You know that I am your friend."

Jesus said, "Feed my sheep.

The truth of the matter is,  
when you were young,  
you put on your own belt  
and walked where you liked;  
but when you get old,  
you will stretch out your hands  
and someone else will put a belt around you  
and take you where you don't want to go."

With these words, Jesus indicated the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God.

Then the savior said, "Follow me."

Word of God for the people of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Rev. Miranda P. Bermes

Hymn of the Day

Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore  
*UMH 344 – verses 1-4*

*Affirmation of Faith: 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 using the words of our common creed:*

**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 our worship video so that we may lift them up together as a community.*



## Prayers of the People

Holding all of the hopes, joys, prayers, and concerns of our community in our hearts, let us pray together by the power of the Holy Spirit for the church, God's creation, and all who are in need this day.

*A brief silence.*

Your love sustains the church and its ministries. By that love, empower and equip all who guide formation in the church to nurture vibrant, living faith among your people.

God of grace,  
**receive our prayer.**

Your abundance is made known throughout creation. Preserve oceans and rivers, lakes and estuaries so that all creatures living in them might flourish. Make us wise stewards of our local watersheds.

God of grace,  
**receive our prayer.**

Your wisdom guides all who strive for justice and peace. Strengthen the work of grassroots organizers, especially among communities on the frontlines of justice work. Amplify the voices of those most in need, that their leadership guides the way forward.

God of grace,  
**receive our prayer.**

Your compassion surrounds all who are in need. We pray for all people experiencing poverty and food insecurity, and for all struggling with debt and economic uncertainty. Reassure all who experience hopelessness or need your tender care.

God of grace,  
**receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

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.**

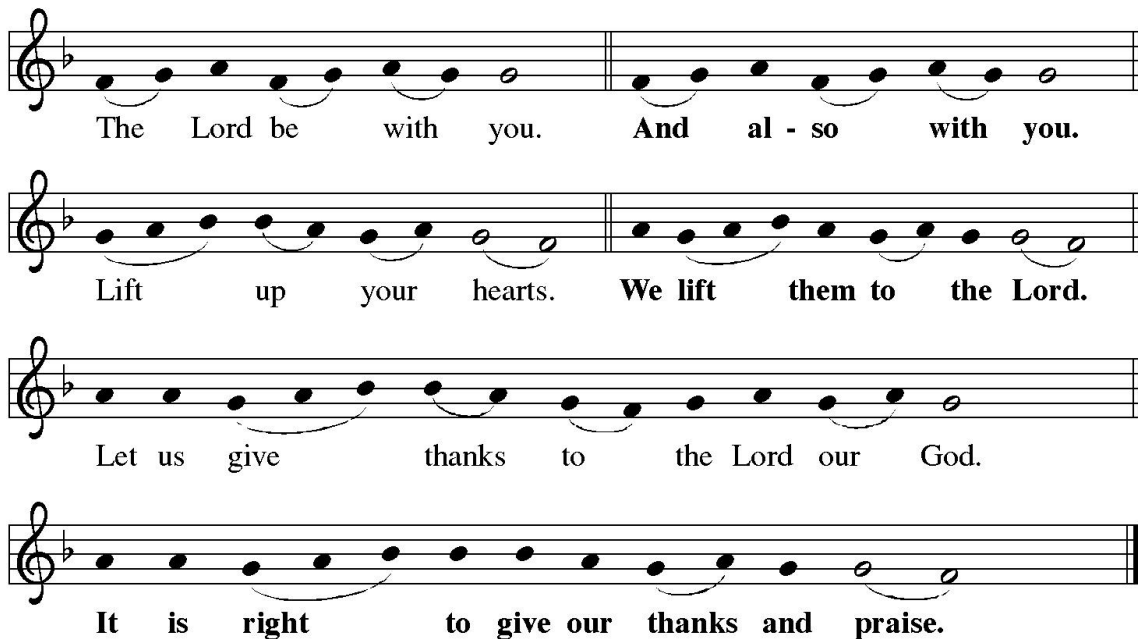
## Offering

*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](#)

## Offertory Prayer

Risen One,  
you have gathered us around your table of grace  
along with these gifts we bring.  
Come among us again,  
breathe your life into us,  
and enliven us with this meal,  
that we may live as your risen body in the world.  
**Amen.**

## The Great Thanksgiving



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The image shows four staves of musical notation in G major (one flat) and 4/4 time. Each staff contains a melody line with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: 'The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.', 'Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.', 'Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.', and 'It is right to give our thanks and praise.' The music consists of quarter and eighth notes with slurs.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise...  
...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,



heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -



san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who



comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

Blessed are you, O God of the universe...

...With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith.



Christ has died. Christ is ris - en. Christ will come a - gain.

O God of resurrection and new life:  
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us  
and on these gifts of bread and wine.  
Bless this feast.  
Grace our table with your presence.  
**Come, Holy Spirit.**

Reveal yourself to us  
in the breaking of the bread.  
Raise us up  
as the body of Christ for the world.  
Breathe new life into us.  
Send us forth,  
burning with justice,  
peace, and love.  
**Come, Holy Spirit.**

With your holy ones of all times and places,  
with the earth and all its creatures,  
with sun and moon and stars,  
we praise you, O God,  
blessed and holy Trinity,  
now and forever.  
**Amen.**

Gathered together by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us, using the language you are most familiar with - the language of your heart.

**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.**

### *Instructions for Communion*

This table of bread and wine has now been made ready.  
So come to this table,  
You who have much faith  
and you who would like to have more;  
you who have been here often  
and you who have not been here long  
you who have tried to follow Jesus,  
and you who have failed;  
Come and eat. It is Christ who invites us all to meet him here.

### *Communion Distribution*

Prayer after Communion

Living One,  
in this feast you have made yourself known to us.  
Send us now to tell of your wonders,  
sing of your glory,  
and proclaim your risen life  
to a wounded and weary world.  
**Amen.**

Sending Song:

Touch That Soothes and Heals the Hurting  
*ACS 939 – verses 1-4*

Blessing

The Triune God,  
who was, who is, and who is to come,  
Sovereign, † Savior, and Spirit  
light your way with resurrection dawn,  
now and always.  
**Amen.**

Dismissal

Alleluia! Christ is risen!  
**Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**  
Alleluia! Go in peace. The Spirit of God is alive in you!  
**Alleluia! Thanks be to God!**



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**Church Office Hours**

**Closed on Thursdays & Fridays**

**Pastor Miranda Bermes**

M-W 9-12, or by appointment

[spiritofgracepastor@gmail.com](mailto:spiritofgracepastor@gmail.com)

**Linda Boris, Pastoral Assistant**

Tuesday 10-1

**Attributions**

*Call to Worship: Phyllis Cole and Everett Tilson, Litanies and Other Prayers, Year C, adapted by the Rev. Dixie Brachlow, Ashland Presbyterian Church, Ashland, VA, and posted on [re-worship.blogspot.com](http://re-worship.blogspot.com)*

*Thanksgiving for Baptism, Prayers of the People, Holy Communion Liturgy, and Benediction- copyright Augsburg Fortress 2025*