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3rd Sunday of End Times November 8 & 9, 2020

“Lord, Keep Us Mindful of the Judgment”

Our King will come to judge the living and the dead. We confess it every Sunday, but often live like those are empty words. We are shaken from our spiritual slumber today. Today we pray that God help us remember the Last Judgment that we might be found in faith, fruitful in both word and deed. We look forward to the day of our redemption.

We live-stream our 8:00am service.

Go to our website www.gracelutheran-church.com and click on the “Live Stream Video” link. Livestreaming will begin about 5 minutes prior to the start of worship. This recording is also archived for future viewing.

GATHERING RITE OF THE WORD OF GOD (*Christian Worship Supplement page 11*)

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **C: Amen**

*We sing stanza 1 of Hymn #221: **Blessed Jesus, at your Word We are gathered all to hear you.
Let our hearts and souls be stirred Now to seek and love and fear you.
By your teaching, sweet and holy, Drawn from earth to love you solely.***

M: Oh, how I love your law! **C: I meditate on it all day long.**

M: Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, **C: for they are ever with me.**

M: I have more insight than all my teachers, **C: for I meditate on your statutes.**

M: How sweet are your words to my taste, **C: sweeter than honey to my mouth!**

*We sing stanza 2: **All our knowledge, sense, and sight Lie in deepest darkness shrouded
Till your Spirit breaks our night With the beams of truth unclouded.
You alone to God can win us; You must work all good within us.***

M: All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,
C: so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

M: Yet so often we have despised God’s Word and failed to gladly hear and learn it. For this and all our sins, we bow before God and humbly ask his forgiveness.

C: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

*We sing stanza 3: **Gracious Savior, good and kind, Light from Light, from God proceeding.
Open now our heart and mind; Help us by your Spirit’s pleading.
Hear the cry your people raises; Hear and bless our prayers and praises.***

M: God gave his Word so “that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name”. The Scriptures testify about Jesus, who lived a perfect life for you, died on the cross to pay for all your sins, and rose again to assure you of your salvation. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ & by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father & of the Son & of the Holy Spirit. **C: Amen.**

*We sing stanza 4: **Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Praise to you and adoration!
Grant that we your Word may trust, Confident of our salvation,
While we here below must wander, Till we sing your praises yonder.***

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

M: Let us pray. Lord God Almighty, so rule and govern our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit that we may always look forward to the end of this present evil age and to the day of your righteous judgment. Keep us steadfast in true and living faith and present us at last holy and blameless before you: through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C: Amen.**

FIRST LESSON: Daniel 7:9-10 & Revelation 20:11-15 (EHV)

Daniel sees a vision of the Last Judgment that is filled with fire and thrones and books. God the Father is seated on his throne with fire beneath him and flowing out from him. Who doesn’t shudder when he sees Daniel’s vision of God and then hears the somber statement, “The books were opened”? Being mindful of the coming judgment means knowing that one day the books will be opened, and God will judge us according to what is in them. But look carefully: there is not just one throne here! Daniel said “thrones” were set in place. See who else is at the judgment. The Son of

God has a throne there. Look at Revelation 20:11-15 and see the rest of the story. There are two kinds of books: books of deeds that record what each person has done, and a book that holds only names. Unbelievers are judged on the basis of their deeds, but believers are judged on the simple fact that their names are written in the book of life. We can rejoice and look forward to the end of this age when we will reign with Christ in glory.

PSALM 90 (page 99)

SECOND LESSON: Philippians 4:4-8 (EHV)

What a wonderful set of words to make our own as we think of our Lord's return as judge and Savior. We are believers and are as different from unbelievers as sheep are from goats, as day is from night. So let's live like it! We have been appointed to receive salvation, so let's live as sons of the light and sons of the day. In what has been a truly challenging year and time, our Lord's imminent return leads us to joyfully grasp and be guided by Paul's words. Rejoice in the Lord!

VERSE OF THE DAY

Alleluia. Watch, therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. Alleluia. (Matthew 24:42)

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 25:31-46 EHV)

The Son of Man came once as a humble baby, but will return as a glorious king with angel armies at his side. He will sit on his throne, and all the nations will be brought before him to be judged. In this judgment, there are no shades of gray: you are either a sheep or a goat—there is no third option. You will either be judged righteous by grace through faith and brought to heaven or condemned and sent into eternal fire. Both sheep and goats fail to see how their earthly lives could possibly merit their eternal fate. In fact, they speak the same words. But the sheep had faith in Christ that gave evidence of itself in the world; the goats had neither faith nor true fruits. Both receive an eternal judgment—life for the sheep and punishment for the goats. Lord, help us look forward to your coming judgment that we might be found in faith, judged by your grace, and gifted with eternal life!

HYMN #728: "Jerusalem the Golden" ALL sing

APOSTLES' CREED

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

M: Lord God, our maker and preserver, we praise and thank you for all that you give us day after day.

C: We are not worthy of all the mercies you show us.

M: You have given us your precious Word to nourish our souls and to protect us from the temptations of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature.

C: We thank you for those who teach and preach your saving truth at this place and everywhere. Grant them a rich measure of patience, wisdom, and love.

M: Heavenly Father, we pray that you shield us from every kind of danger: sudden catastrophe, terrors of crime, and the pain of disease. Watch over those who travel by land, sea, and air. Keep our loved ones from whatever perils may threaten them.

C: Heal those who are sick, cheer those who are sad, calm those who are distressed, and comfort all who are old and infirm.

M: Bless our land, our people, and those who hold offices of high trust. Keep our government and schools upright and strong for the advancement of good citizenship and useful vocations, that we may enjoy your gifts of peace, security, and well-being.

C: Grant your blessing to every nation on earth. Where there are wars, may there be peace. Where there is hatred, let it be healed. Where there is poverty, danger, or disaster, come with your almighty power to help and restore.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

M: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayer.

M: We bring these requests before you in the name of Jesus our Lord, and ask you to hear us. Take all that we have, our bodies and minds, our time and skills, our ministries and offerings, and use them to your glory.

C: We give ourselves to you that we may serve you in whatever way is pleasing in your sight. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Traditional)

BLESSING - concludes with ALL singing: Amen, Amen, Amen.

HYMN #760: "When Peace Like a River"

- **November Calendars are available on the Information Table—also available on our church website.**
- **Food Drive continues through November 29.**
- **New 4 week Bible Class "Politics Is Driving Me Crazy" starts next week: Tue 6:30pm, Wed 1:30pm & the following Sun 9:20am. First topic is "A Tale of Two Kingdoms".**