

*This Week at Grace*  
*Sunday, May 6, 2007*  
*The Fifth Sunday of Easter*

**INTRODUCTION**

*Visions of the end time work their way into our Easter worship. A strange and wondrous vision from God instructs Peter about how wide the new fellowship in Christ might be. John's vision of a new Jerusalem suggests that beginnings and endings are tied to Jesus. In the gospel, Jesus begins to prepare his disciples for his departure. We, too, gather this day as Jesus' end-time community, with one foot planted in this world and the other in the world to come.*

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

O Lord God,  
you teach us that without love, our actions gain nothing.  
Pour into our hearts your most excellent gift of love,  
that, made alive by your Spirit, we may know goodness and peace,  
through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever. Amen.

**FIRST READING** Acts 11:1–18

*In defense of his earlier baptism of pagan believers, Peter demonstrates to the members of the Jerusalem church that God's intention to save Gentiles as well as Jews is revealed in Jesus' own testimony. In this way the mission to the Gentiles was officially authorized.*

Now the apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God.<sup>2</sup> So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him,<sup>3</sup> saying, "Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?"<sup>4</sup> Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying,<sup>5</sup> I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me.<sup>6</sup> As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air.<sup>7</sup> I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.'<sup>8</sup> But I replied, 'By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.'<sup>9</sup> But a second time the voice answered from heaven, 'What God has made clean, you must not call profane.'<sup>10</sup> This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to

heaven. <sup>11</sup> At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. <sup>12</sup> The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. <sup>13</sup> He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; <sup>14</sup> he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.' <sup>15</sup> And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. <sup>16</sup> And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' <sup>17</sup> If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?" <sup>18</sup> When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, "Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life."

**PSALM**      *Psalm 148*

*The splendor of the LORD is over earth and heaven. (Ps. 148:13)*

<sup>1</sup>Hallelujah! Praise the LORD | from the heavens;  
praise God | in the heights.  
<sup>2</sup>**Praise the LORD, | all you angels;**  
**sing praise, all you | hosts of heaven.**  
<sup>3</sup>Praise the LORD, | sun and moon;  
sing praise, all you | shining stars.  
<sup>4</sup>**Praise the LORD, heav- | en of heavens,**  
**and you waters a- | bove the heavens.**  
<sup>5</sup>Let them praise the name | of the LORD,  
who commanded, and they | were created,  
<sup>6</sup>**who made them stand fast forev- | er and ever,**  
**giving them a law which shall not | pass away. R**  
<sup>7</sup>Praise the LORD | from the earth,  
you sea monsters | and all deeps;  
<sup>8</sup>**fire and hail, | snow and fog,**  
**tempestuous wind, do- | ing God's will;**  
<sup>9</sup>mountains | and all hills,  
fruit trees | and all cedars;  
<sup>10</sup>**wild beasts | and all cattle,**  
**creeping things and | flying birds;**  
<sup>11</sup>sovereigns of the earth | and all peoples,  
princes and all rulers | of the world;  
<sup>12</sup>**young | men and maidens,**  
**old and | young together. R**  
<sup>13</sup>Let them praise the name | of the LORD,  
whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over | earth and heaven.  
<sup>14</sup>**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!**

**R**

**SECOND READING**      *Revelation 21:1–6*

*John's vision shows us that in the resurrection the new age has dawned; God dwells with us already. Yet we wait for the time when the tears that cloud our vision will be wiped away. Then we will see the new heaven, new earth, and new Jerusalem.*

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.<sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.<sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

"See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them;

they will be his peoples,

and God himself will be with them;

<sup>4</sup> he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,

for the first things have passed away."

<sup>5</sup> And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new."

Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true."<sup>6</sup> Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.

**GOSPEL**      *John 13:31–35*

*Jesus speaks of his glorification on the cross. As Jesus loves, even to death on the cross, so ought his disciples love one another. Indeed, love shall be the distinctive mark of Jesus' community.*

<sup>31</sup> When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him.<sup>32</sup> If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once.<sup>33</sup> Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.'<sup>34</sup> I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.<sup>35</sup> By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

**THIS WEEK AT GRACE**

<b>TODAY:</b>	8:30a	and 11:00a	Worship Services
	9:30a		Coffee Fellowship
	9:45a		Sunday School/Education Hour
	11:00a		Spring Musical Rehearsal
	7:00p		Book Club
	7:00p		Cantori Concert
<b>MONDAY:</b>	6:00p		Daughters of Grace Banquet
<b>TUESDAY:</b>	9:00a		Staff Meeting
	9:30a		Ladies Bible Study
	11:00a		Pastor's Text Study
	2:30p		3D Meeting
	6:30 or 7:00p		Ministry Team Meetings
	8:00p		Church Council Meeting
<b>WEDNESDAY:</b>	1:00p		Grace Seniors
	5:30p		Cherub/Chancel Choir Rehearsals
	5:30-8:00p		9 <sup>th</sup> gr. Confirmation Stole Making
	6:30p		8 <sup>th</sup> gr. Acolyte Training
	6:30p		7 <sup>th</sup> gr. Fellowship Night
	6:30p		Sr. High Bible Study
	7:30p		Adult Choir
<b>THURSDAY:</b>	6:00a		Early Morning Bible Study
	NO		Thursday Evening Bible Study
<b>FRIDAY:</b>	1:30p		ThorneCrest Bible Study
	3:30p		4 <sup>th</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> gr. Youth Room
<b>SATURDAY:</b>	10:00a		Confirmation Interviews
<b>NEXT SUNDAY:</b>			<b><i>Mother's Day</i></b>
	8:30a	and 11:00a	Worship Services
	9:30a		Coffee Fellowship
	9:45a		Sunday School/Education Hour
	11:00a		Spring Musical Rehearsal

**MISSIONARY FOR A DAY:** [May 6: Given by Pastor Milt & Delores Ost.] [May 6: Sunday School] [May 7: Given by Babe & Lois Brandt.] [May 8: Given by Pastor Todd Walsh.] [May 9: GLCW].

**REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS** our members and friends known to have been hospitalized this past week: Laura Attig, Lorna Anderson, and Howard Erickson.

**PLEASE REMEMBER** those needing the continuing prayers of our congregation: Janice Anderson, Judy Anderson, Larry Bergo, Kathy Diaz, Carol Fisher (mother of Lynn Stadheim), Theresa Gamble, Shirley Gold, Jan Guse, Dan Hagen, Tara Hanson, April Hustoft, Marlys Jahnke, Norman Johnson, Glenn McDaniel, Ethel McGill, Vern Nasby, DeAnna Nelson, LeMoyne Oakland, Marian Odson, Lissa Parrish, Bob Richerson (brother of Nancy Greiner), Joyce Schreiber, Mark Stevens, LaVon Stewart, James Vangen, Leland Wadding, Sally Witham (mother of Greg Witham), and Eleanor Wolfe.

**GREETERS FOR OUR WORSHIP SERVICES** this morning are Ray & Joyce Langerud at 8:30; and Roger & Arladeen Dahl, Mary Ann Dixen, and Carolyn Breuer at 11:00.

**ACOLYTES** are Amber Zemek and Andrea Crom at 8:30; and Alex Lau and Nikko Grace at 11:00.

**FLOWERS TODAY** have been given in memory of David Hall by Judy, Michael & Cheryl Hall, and Chad & Melanie Royer; and also in honor of Jeanie Godtland by LuVerne and their children.

**THE ROSE IN THE CHANCEL** is given today in celebration of the baptism of *Owen Benjamin Davis*.

**LESSON READERS** are Judy Menssen at 8:30; and Jo Sandler at 11:00.

**COMMUNION BREAD AND WINE** is given today in memory of Jim Laeger and Glenn & Marianne Hagemeister by Jeff & Mary Laeger-Hagemeister.

**ASSISTING WITH COMMUNION** for our services are Carlyle & Dona Matheson at 8:30; and Randy & Kristi Maiers at 11:00.

**WE JOIN OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS in Christ** throughout the Southeast Minnesota Synod today in praying for Mona Lutheran Church of Lyle, First Lutheran in Glenville, Lands Lutheran of Zumbrota, and Pontoppidan Lutheran Church in Ellendale.

**THURSDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY** will not meet for the remainder of the year, but will resume again in the fall.

**REFRESHMENTS BETWEEN SERVICES** are being served this morning by Cody Wichmann and his parents, Warren & Terri.

**EQUAL EXCHANGE COFFEE** is available today before and after both services. This is the last sale date until Rally Day. Chocolate will not be available again until October. Stock up today!

**CANTORI CONCERT: Tonight, 7:00p**

Everyone is cordially invited to the Spring performance of the Albert Lea Cantori this evening at 7:00p, here at Grace Lutheran. Composed of singers from the area, Cantori's program will include spirituals, contemporary impressionistic works, and American folk music including *Ashoken Farewell*. Admission is a free-will offering and refreshments will be offered following the concert.

**BOOK CLUB** will meet tonight, 7:00p, at the home of Hazel Spiering, 2122 Grand Ave. (Note date change, this month only.) The featured book is *The Little Sparrows* by Al & JoAnna Lacy. Join us for great discussion and fellowship!

**SPECIAL THANKS** to Steve Bracker who is serving as van driver today. Our church van picks up riders every Sunday for the 11:00 worship service. If you or anyone you know is interested in riding the van, please call the church office to be added to the pick up schedule.

**GRACE SENIORS: Wednesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1:00p**

Grace Seniors will meet that day in the Fireside Room to view the film *Homeland*, presented by Roger Lunning. This is a movie about an immigrant family from Norway. (The movie will be about two hours long, so we will start at 1:00 to 3:00, and then we will have lunch and coffee.) This is a very, very good movie and all actors are local from Lake Mills. You may even know some of the people yourself, so come out and bring all your Norwegian friends along and enjoy. All will be glad they came!

**"CHURCH BASEMENT LADIES" TRIP: One ticket has now become available** (please call Becky Tennis Hanson if you are interested in attending, 373-7275). There is an informational flyer for everyone who has signed up for tickets on the GLCW table in the narthex. It includes departure time, cost, description of the meal, and process for the collection of funds. Approximately half of the funds have been collected at this time. If you have not already done so, please send payment as directed in the flyer.

**WHY DO I NEED A WILL?** Attend an evening about estate planning and Wills with ELCA Foundation Representative Deborah Simonson Smith on Tues., May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 6:30p, at Salem Lutheran Church of Albert Lea. Discover how a sound estate plan can save your family tax dollars and legal fees, and how you can financially, emotionally and spiritually care for your minor children in the event of your passing. Find out what an advanced directive is and why you should make your medical choices ahead of time. You will also learn why people of all ages need a will and how to go about getting one made, along with how to remember the people and caring ministries that have meant the most to you and your family. A sign up sheet is located in the narthex for anyone planning to attend.

**THE COMMUNITY GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP** will be sponsoring a presentation entitled, *Mind/Body Health: Bringing Mind and Body Together in Healing through the Grieving Process*, to be held Tuesday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 6:30p, at the HealthReach facility. Dr. Craig M. Helbok, a licensed psychologist at the Albert Lea Medical Center will be the featured presenter.

**RELAY FOR LIFE:** Planning has begun for the American Cancer Society Relay for Life which will be held in August. The planning committee for the Grace team is looking for lots of help and input. We would like a team 'theme' and Bible verse, a team logo, and lots of team participants during the walk. Please be thinking about these things and watch for future announcements. There will be opportunities for fundraising, team building, and fellowship as our Grace team helps to raise money for the fight against cancer.

**GLCW NOTE:** Please save 8 oz. cool whip containers and their lids to keep in our church kitchen closet. Many times we need this size container to give leftover food from events to people to take home. Any donations can be left on the kitchen counter and we will stick them away to be used for that purpose. Thank you for your help.

#### **A NOTE OF THANKS**

We want to thank everyone who made the birthday/anniversary party such a wonderful day. Special thanks to the Caring and Sharing for the month of April. It was very much appreciated.

Willard & Alice Spilde, and Sharon, Ray and Christine Dale

**NEEDED:** white t-shirts in sizes 4, 6, 8 (mixed boys and girls); 10-12, 14, 16 for boys; and 10-16 for girls. During VBS this summer we will be decorating new t-shirts for the Children's Orphanage in Bogota, Columbia, at the request of Jeanene Thicke. Please help us out with your donations. They can be dropped off at the Education Office.

**GRACE LADIES: A WEEKLY OPPORTUNITY** to join in prayer with other women through the US, the Carribean, and Canada is available at [www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org).

**A NEW WAY TO KEEP UP** on faith-based issues and articles is called e-zines: *Café* is the name of the online magazine. (Very popular with the younger ladies of the ELCA.) Check it out! You can go to [www.elca.org/wo/café](http://www.elca.org/wo/café).

**GIVING AT GRACE:**

The Property and Finance Ministry appreciates your generous support.  
Your faithful stewardship is essential for us to continue to support our ministries at Grace.

	<b>Sunday, Apr. 29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b><u>Year to Date</u></b>
General Fund Giving	\$ 9,183.00	\$ 186,025.00
Budgeted Need	\$ 10,096.00	\$ 171,632.00
Quarters for World Hunger	\$ 40.50	\$ 824.75
Stones, Rocks, Boulders Fund	\$ 802.00	

Attendance Last Sunday - 426; Last Sunday - 519

**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**Albert Lea, Minnesota**

**FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**  
May 6, 2007