

*Discipling God's people through the Means of Grace,
GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
strives to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ
so that all may abide
in the assurance of their calling to be God's chosen people
and equipped to fulfill their vocations
in lives of service
at home, in the community and in the congregation.*

A STUDY OF THE MISSION STATEMENT OF GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH



Grace Lutheran Church & School
Learning to live life as it's meant to be.

THE MISSION STATEMENT OF GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Mission Statement

Discipling God's people through the Means of Grace, GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH strives to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ so that all may abide in the assurance of their calling to be God's chosen people and equipped to fulfill their vocations in lives of service at home, in the community and in the congregation.

∞ **DISCIPLING GOD'S PEOPLE**

From Matthew 28, it is clear that "making disciples" is primary to any discussion of the mission of the Church. Thus, Jesus' command in the "Great Commission" is prominent in this statement. ***Discipling*** is understood to be an ongoing activity of the church, encouraging a life-long following of Jesus in faith, trust and obedience.

Echoing the "all nations" of Matthew 28, this discipling is made available to all ***God's people*** who, in the context of this proposed statement, include those who are members and friends of this congregation and those in the community that might be reached through the various ministries of the church or through the evangelistic efforts of the members.

Matthew 28:19 (ESV)

¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Matthew 16:24 (ESV)

²⁴ Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

1 Peter 2:21 (ESV)

²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.

Exodus 19:5 (ESV)

⁵ Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine;

Romans 1:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Ephesians 3:6 (ESV)

⁶ This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.



∞ **THROUGH THE MEANS OF GRACE,**

Through the Means of Grace refers to the proclamation of the Gospel (absolution, preaching, etc...) and the administration of the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Altar according to the Word of God. It is through these means that the Holy Spirit works faith, offers forgiveness, and strengthens the believer as a follower of Jesus. Again, the influence of Matthew 28 is clearly present as disciples are made through the ongoing use of Baptism and instruction of all that Jesus taught. These activates, as confessed in Articles are central to both the identity of the church as well as how the church carries out her mission.

II Timothy 3:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ And how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Acts 2:42 (ESV)

⁴² And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Acts 2:38 (ESV)

³⁸ And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

I Corinthians 11:23–25 (ESV)

²³ For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

From Article VII of the Augsburg Confession

The Church is the congregation of saints in which the Gospel is purely taught and the Sacraments are correctly administered.

From Article V of the Augsburg Confession

So that we may obtain this faith, the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted. Through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Spirit is given [John 20:22]. He works faith, when and where it pleases God [John 3:8], in those who hear the good news that God justifies those who believe that they are received into grace for Christ's sake. ³ This happens not through our own merits, but for Christ's sake.

∞ STRIVES TO PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST

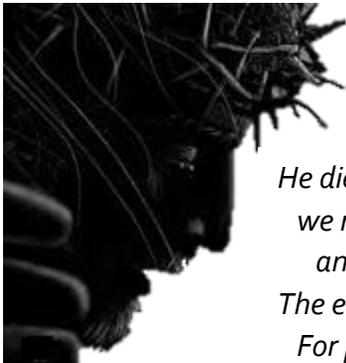
In Luke's version of the "Great Commission," Jesus conveys the core message which the apostles were to take to all nations – the preaching of repentance and forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name. **Strives to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ** emphasizes that mandate and grounds the ministry of the congregation in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Luke 24:47 (ESV)

⁴⁷ And that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

II Corinthians 4:5 (ESV)

⁵ For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.



*He died that
we might die to sin
and live for righteousness;
The earth is stained to make us clean and bring us into peace.
For peace He came and met its cost, He gave Himself to save the lost;
He loved us to the uttermost and paid for our release.*

"In Silent Pain the Eternal Son" (LSB #432, st. 2)

Acts 10:36–43 (ESV)

³⁶ As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), ³⁷ you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹ And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰ but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, ⁴¹ not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

1 Corinthians 1:23 (ESV)

²³ But we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles.

∞ SO THAT ALL MAY ABIDE

So that all may abide attempts to capture the essence of Jesus’ words in John 15, emphasizing the source and unity of the enduring and purposeful life which is lived in the shadow of the cross. Abide is not a true synonym of live. Rather, to abide means to remain, to stay rooted, in a conviction and way of life that provides meaning and purpose to one’s life.

John 15:5–11 (ESV)

⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. ⁹ As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹ These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

Acts 17:28 (ESV)

²⁸ For “ ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, “ ‘For we are indeed his offspring.’”

∞ IN THE ASSURANCE OF THEIR CALLING TO BE GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE

One of the core spiritual needs of all Christians is **the assurance of their calling to be God's chosen people**. This part of the mission statement is designed to hold up the affirmation that despite the sinfulness of His people God continues to call people from their guilt and shame and claim them as His people.

I Peter 2:9–11 (ESV)

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. ¹¹ Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.

II Peter 1:10–11 (ESV)

¹⁰ Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. ¹¹ For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Deuteronomy 14:2 (ESV)

² For you are a people holy to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

I Corinthians 1:26–31 (ESV)

²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹ so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰ And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

∞ AND EQUIPPED TO FULFILL THEIR VOCATIONS

A second but equally important need of God's people is to see and understand that their endeavors in this world are blessed and designed by God and, therefore, provide true meaning and purpose to life in this world. When the people of God are **equipped to fulfill their vocations**, they can live in the confidence that their work is valued by God and that they serving God in real and significant ways.

II Timothy 3:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ That the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Ephesians 2:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

I Corinthians 7:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him. This is my rule in all the churches.

Ephesians 4:12 (ESV)

¹² To equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,

∞ IN LIVES OF SERVICE

Understanding the doctrine of vocation allows for true ***lives of service*** in that the fulfillment of one's vocational responsibilities is the synthesis between faith towards God and service towards one's neighbor. Service in this sense does not ask, "What can I do for God?" but, "What can God do through me?" Service in this sense is being the means through which God performs His creative and providential work.

I Peter 4:10–11 (ESV)

¹⁰ As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: ¹¹ whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Galatians 5:13–14 (ESV)

¹³ For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ¹⁴ For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."



∞ **AT HOME, IN THE COMMUNITY AND IN THE CONGREGATION.**

Luther writes, "This life is profitably divided into three orders: (1) life ***at home***; (2) life ***in the community***, and (3) life ***in the church***. To whatever order you belong – whether you are a husband, an officer of the state, or a teacher of the church – look about you, and see whether you have done full justice to your calling and there is no need of asking to be pardoned for negligence, dissatisfaction, or impatience."

1 Timothy 5:8 (ESV) (Home)

⁸ But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Matthew 25:35–36 (ESV) (Community)

³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.'

Galatians 6:10 (ESV) (Church)

¹⁰ So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

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