

# *A Service Centered in the Vocare Spiritual Practice*



## **1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

*"The LORD is near to the broken-hearted,  
and saves the crushed in spirit."  
Psalm 34:15*

Vocare is the Latin word meaning "to call." The Vocare spiritual practice invites regular reflection upon values, openness, call, attentiveness, regrets, and experiences of God's presence. As baptized children of God, we have been claimed by God, named by God, and called to be a part of bearing God's creative and redeeming Word to all the world. This liturgy invites worshipers into reflection and contemplation to deepen their understanding of God's call upon their life and work, their labor and their leisure, their being and their doing, so that they might more intentionally live life on purpose and engage in ministry on purpose for the common good.

**Bulletin Donated By: Kyle & Olivia, "Happy Birthday Martin!"**

**Welcome** (*VOCARE*: “to call”)

**Call to Worship**

*Breathe in the Goodness of God*

*Booklet*

Christ is with you.  
**And also with you.**

We come together this morning, trusting that God is near to the broken-hearted and brings shalom to those whose spirits are crushed. We carry with us all the seasons of our lives – lives marked by joy and sorrow, peace and conflict, ease and distress, brokenness and belovedness.

**Meet us here, Oh Christ. Strengthen us, renew us, nourish us in your call for our lives, and bring us shalom.**

We come to reflect on our values and consider how they inform our actions and decisions.  
**May we be mindful of what we truly value in life and how our values are reflected in our choices.**

We come to be open to the ways in which God is calling us, and how we can respond with faith and courage.

**May we be open to the movements of the Spirit and ready to follow where God leads.**

We come to be aware of the many and varied voices that call to us each day, listening especially for those voices that are life giving and life-sustaining.

**May we be discerning in the voices that form and shape us, heeding those that build up and turning away from those that tear down.**

We come to practice attentiveness, focusing our minds on God’s presence in our lives, and seeking divine guidance and wisdom.

**May we be attentive to the holy and receptive to the wisdom and guidance of God.**

We come to name any regrets we may have, seeking forgiveness and renewal as we move forward.

**May we find healing and renewed purpose as we seek and receive God’s forgiveness.**

We come to be mindful of experiences of God’s presence in new and profound ways.

**May we be receptive to the ways in which the divine is revealed to us, and may we be transformed by these encounters.**

We come to worship together, opening ourselves fully to the love and presence of God.  
**Amen.**

**Call to Worship**

**Values** (Scripture)

As we prepare to hear the Word of God, we reflect on our values. Our values are what we hold dear and what we prioritize in life. They inform our actions and decisions, and shape who we are and who we are becoming.

*“Singing Bowl”*  
*silence for reflection*  
*“Singing Bowl”*

We now turn our hearts and minds to the reading of the Word, asking God to speak to us through the Holy Scriptures.

***Reading: Ruth 1 – Beloved With God's Healing & Hope***

**1** In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to live in the country of Moab, he and his wife and two sons. **2** The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon<sup>a</sup> and Chilion;<sup>b</sup> they were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. **3** But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. **4** These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. When they had lived there about ten years, **5** both Mahlon and Chilion also died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband. **6** Then she started to return with her daughters-in-law from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had considered his people and given them food. **7** So she set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. **8** But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back each of you to your mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. **9** The LORD grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband." Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. **10** They said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." **11** But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters. Why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? **12** Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons, **13** would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the LORD has turned against me." **14** Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her. **15** So she said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." **16** But Ruth said, "Do not press me to leave you, to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people and your God my God. **17** Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do thus to me, and more as well, if even death parts me from you!" **18** When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her. **19** So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women said, "Is this Naomi?" **20** She said to them, "Call me no longer Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt bitterly with me. **21** I went away full, but the LORD has brought me back empty; why call me Naomi when the LORD has dealt harshly with me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?" **22** So Naomi returned together with Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, who came back with her from the country of Moab. They came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

L: Word of God. Word of Life.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**Openness (Centering)**

As the seasons rise and fall in our lives and in the life of the whole world, we open our hearts to God's leading, and ask God to help us be receptive and responsive to God's calling in our lives. We sing together:

**Call** (Message) : What are you grieving today? *Where do you feel empty? What loss are you holding close to your heart? What do you want to lament (or cry out) to God with? Take a couple minutes to write your responses/prayers on a piece of paper, or to reflect on them silently. Keep your responses to use later in this service.*

*Devotional Reflection  
Mini-monologue  
Silence for reflection*

Through the sharing of the Word, you have called us, O God.

**Lead us by your Spirit to live out this call.**

**Centering Song*****Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying*****ELW #752****Attentiveness** (Prayer)

Ever watchful Lord,  
Your steadfast love never ceases, and your mercies are new every morning. As we gather this evening under your watchful presence, we pray for the grace to be more attentive to your presence in our lives.

For the church universal, that our leaders and members may be attuned to the whispers of your Spirit, we pray:  
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For the world and its leaders, that they may be attentive to the needs of the marginalized and act with justice and compassion, we pray:  
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For our community, that we may notice those in need and respond with kindness and empathy, we pray:  
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For ourselves, that we may be fully present in each moment, aware of your persistent love and guidance, we pray:  
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those who are suffering, that they may feel your comforting presence and know they are not alone, we pray:  
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord, grant us the grace to be attentive to your voice amidst the noise of the world. Help us to be present, to notice, and to respond to your call in our lives. Amen.

## Regrets (Confession)

Gracious God,

We gather before you, acknowledging our human frailty and our need for your grace. We bring our full selves to you – in all our brokenness and beloved-ness, seeking your shalom. In this moment of confession, we bring our regrets, the actions we wish we could undo, the words we wish we could unsay.

We confess that we have not always lived in accordance with your will. We have chosen our own way over yours, and we have caused harm to ourselves and others. **We carry the weight of these regrets, Lord.**

We confess the times we have closed our hearts to your love, the times we have turned away from our neighbor in need, the times we have neglected the care of your creation. **For these, and all our regrets, known and unknown, we seek your forgiveness.**

In your great mercy, Lord, forgive us. Heal the wounds of our past mistakes and free us from the burden of regret. Grant us the courage to seek reconciliation, and the wisdom to learn from our past. **Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

In the mercy of Almighty God, Father +Son, and Holy Spirit, Beloved Ones, your sins are forgiven in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

## Experience God's Presence

### Make-A-Change & Offering

*\*You are invited to bring your offering forward as you come up for communion and place it in the offering plate. (Make-A-Change jar will be located in the back of the sanctuary)*

**Ways To Give Offering: In Person, Venmo and Online [www.galutheranchurch.org](http://www.galutheranchurch.org)**



venmo



*Because you give...  
we worship, fellowship, learn, serve and grow.  
**Thank you for your generosity!***

## Holy Communion

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, creator of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. In the cool of the evening, you walked with Adam and Eve in the garden, and in the fullness of time, you revealed yourself in the person of Jesus.

L: On the night he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: **All: "Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."**

L: Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to all to drink, saying: **All: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me."**

L: With thanksgiving, we proclaim the mystery of faith: All: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

As we partake of this holy meal, may we experience anew your presence among us. Strengthen us, O God, for service in your world, and make us one in Christ, through the power of your Spirit. Amen.

Praying now in whatever language or translation is the language of your heart:

*The Lord's Prayer*

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever.  
Amen.**

Taste and See that the Lord is good.

*Communion is served*

**Painting Reflection** ~ *Imagine you are painting your grief with God's healing and hope.*

## **Benediction**

As God's Beloved Ones, covered by God's promise of shalom, we practice *VOCARE* (*Vo-car-e*) as we prepare to end this day and look toward tomorrow.

**We acknowledge our values, and seek to live in accordance with them, following the example of Christ.**

We strive to be open to the new ideas and opportunities for growth that the Holy Spirit may bring.

**Grant us the grace to be receptive to your guidance and to step boldly into the unknown.**

We listen for the call of our deepest selves and respond with courage and faith, trusting in God.

**Help us to discern your voice amidst the noise of the world, and to be your faithful disciples.**

We cultivate attentiveness to the present moment, where we encounter the divine in our daily lives.

**May we find you in unexpected places and moments, and be mindful of your presence around us.**

We face our regrets with compassion, seeking the insight they offer and the grace of forgiveness.

**Give us the strength to learn from our mistakes and to reconcile with those we have wronged.**

And we give thanks for the ways we have experienced God’s presence in our lives today and every day.

**For your constant love and provision, we give you thanks and praise. In the name of +Jesus, Amen.**

**Sending Song**

***God’s Love has been Given to Me***

*Booklet*

*~The greeting of peace may be shared by all*

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This liturgy was adapted from an “Evening VOCARE Worship” written by Eric E. Parrish, Music Director, First Lutheran Church, Worthington, MN in consultation with Rev. Dr. Charlene Rachuy Cox, Director of Programming, Engagement, and Innovation for Congregational Thriving, through the Lutheran Center for Faith, Values, and Community at St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN.

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Mission Statement of Gustaf Adolf Lutheran Church (Adopted in 2022)

**To share the Good News of God’s Word and to serve the community and the world.**

*Matthew 22:39* ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

*Matthew 28:19* 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,

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We celebrate weekly Holy Communion. We welcome all who believe in the Risen Christ and who find in the sacrament our Lord’s real presence for the forgiveness of sins and the renewal of life. If you receive communion in your home congregation, you are invited to receive it here at G.A. Red wine and white grape juice will be offered to you in Christ’s name. You may choose your preference. If you are unable to receive wheat bread, or wine, be sure that in a single element you receive the Presence and all the gifts of the sacrament. *From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted and live streamed by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #35904. CCLI# 3138595 and #21256999*

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