

*To Celebrate the Life and
Rejoice in the Resurrection of
Rev. Zachary W. Johnson*

6/10/1984 - 9/1/2023



Saturday, October 7, 2023

10:30 AM

Hill Avenue Grace Lutheran Church



Hill Ave Grace
Lutheran Church

Prelude

Hannah Lee

GATHERING

Pastor Garry Mohr

Welcome in the name of Jesus, the Savior of the world. We are gathered to worship, to proclaim Christ crucified and risen, to remember before God our brother Zach, to give thanks for his life, to commend him to our merciful redeemer, and to comfort one another in our grief.

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

When we were baptized in Christ Jesus, we were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

Eternal god, maker of heaven and earth, who formed us from the dust of the earth, who by your breath gave us life, we glorify you. **We glorify you.**

Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life, who suffered death for all humanity, who rose from the grave to open the way to eternal life, we praise you. **We praise you.**

Holy spirit, author and giver of life, the comforter of all who sorrow, our sure confidence and everlasting hope, we worship you. **We worship you.**

To you, O blessed Trinity, be glory and honor, forever and ever. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

For All the Saints

ELW 422
Vs 1-2, 5-7

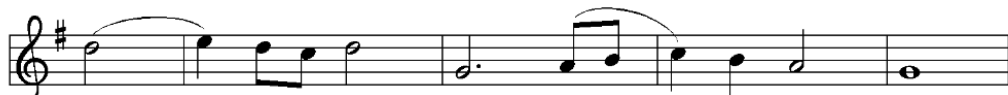
1 For all the saints who from their labors rest, who
 2 Thou wast their rock, their fortress, and their might; thou,
Stanzas 3-5 below
 6 But then there breaks a yet more glorious day: the
 7 From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast, through



thee by faith before the world confessed, thy
 Lord, their captain in the well-fought fight; . . .
 saints triumphant rise in bright array; the
 gates of pearl streams in the countless host, . . .



name, O Jesus, be forever blest.
 thou, in the darkness drear, their one true light.
 King of glory pass - es on his way.
 sing - ing to Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost:



Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

3 Oh, blest com - mu - nion, fel - low - ship di - vine,
4 And when the strife is fierce, the war - fare long,
5 The gold - en eve - ning bright - ens in the west;

we fee - bly strug - gle, they in glo - ry shine; yet
steals on the ear the dis - tant tri - umph song, and
soon, soon to faith - ful ser - vants com - eth rest; . . .

all are one in thee, for all are thine.
hearts are brave a - gain and arms are strong.
sweet is the calm of par - a - dise the blest.

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

Text: William W. How, 1823–1897
 Music: SINE NOMINE, Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872–1958
 Outside USA: Music from *The English Hymnal*, © Oxford University Press 1906.

GREETING

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.

KYRIE
(Lord Have Mercy)

In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,

and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. **A - men.**

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Refrain
This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. I Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb

who was slain, whose blood set us free to be peo - ple of God.

Refrain
This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 2 Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and
strength, and hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his.

Refrain
This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 3 Sing with all the peo - ple of
God, and join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing, hon - or,
glo - ry, and might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

Refrain
This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 4 For the Lamb who was
slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.

Final refrain
This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God of grace and glory, we remember before you today our brother Zach. We thank you for giving him to us to know and to love as a companion in our pilgrimage on earth. In your

boundless compassion, console us who mourn. Give us faith to see that death has been swallowed up in the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that we may live in confidence and hope until, by your call, we are gathered to our heavenly home in the company of all your saints; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

FIRST READING: Psalm 139:1-18

- ¹O LORD, you have searched me and known me.
²You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away.
³You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways.
⁴Even before a word is on my tongue, O LORD, you know it completely.
⁵You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.
⁶Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.
⁷Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?
⁸If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.
⁹If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,
¹⁰even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast.
¹¹If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night,"
¹²even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day,
 for darkness is as light to you.
¹³For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb.
¹⁴I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.
¹⁵My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
¹⁶Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed.
¹⁷How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!
¹⁸I try to count them — they are more than the sand; I come to the end — I am still with you.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALMODY HYMN

ELW 502

The King of Love My Shepherd Is

1 The King of love my shep - herd is, whose good - ness
 2 Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow, my ran - somed
 3 Per - verse and fool - ish oft I strayed, but yet in
 4 In death's dark vale I fear no ill, with thee, dear

fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if
 soul he lead - eth and, where the ver - dant
 love he sought me, and on his shoul - der
 Lord, be - side me, thy rod and staff my

I am his and he is mine for - ev - er.
 pas - tures grow, with food ce - les - tial feed - eth.
 gent - ly laid, and home, re - joic - ing, brought me.
 com - fort still; thy cross be - fore to guide me.

Text: Henry W. Baker, 1821–1877
 Music: ST. COLUMBA, Irish tune

SECOND READING: Romans 8:26-39

²⁶Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³²He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written,

"For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL
ACCLAMATION**

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: John 14:1-7, 15-17, 25-31

¹Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. ²In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴And you know the way to the place where I am going." ⁵Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" ⁶Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

¹⁵If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. ¹⁷This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

²⁵I have said these things to you while I am still with you. ²⁶But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. ²⁷Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. ²⁸You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I am coming to you.' If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I. ²⁹And now I have told you this before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe. ³⁰I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me; ³¹but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us be on our way.

The Gospel of our Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Bishop Brenda Bos

HYMN OF THE DAY

Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me

ELW 767

1 Lord, take my hand and lead me up - on life's way;
 2 Lord, when the tem - pest ra - ges, I need not fear;
 3 Lord, when the shad - ows length - en and night has come,

di - rect, pro - tect, and feed me from day to day.
 for you, the Rock of A - ges, are al - ways near.
 I know that you will strength - en my steps toward home,

With - out your grace and fa - vor I go a - stray;
 Close by your side a - bid - ing, I fear no foe,
 then noth - ing can im - pede me, O bless - ed Friend!

so take my hand, O Sav - ior, and lead the way.
 for when your hand is guid - ing, in peace I go.
 So, take my hand and lead me un - to the end.

Text: Julie von Hausmann, 1825–1901; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
 Music: SO NIMM DENN MEINE HÄNDE, Friedrich Silcher, 1789–1860
 Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
 he descended to the dead.**

On the third day he rose again;

he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father,

and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition ends with "God of mercy," the assembly responds with "receive our prayer."

SHARING OF THE PEACE - The presiding and the assembly share a virtual sign of peace.

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

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.

It is indeed right...we praise your name and join their unending hymn.

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

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.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God, you alone are holy, you alone are God. The universe declares your praise: beyond the stars; beneath the sea; within each cell; with every breath. **We praise you, O God.**

Generations bless your faithfulness: through the water; by night and day; across the wilderness; out of exile; into the future. **We bless you, O God.**

We give you thanks for your dear Son: at the heart of human life; near to those who suffer; beside the sinner; among the poor; with us now. **We thank you, O God.**

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

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

Remembering his love for us on the way, at the table, and to the end, we proclaim the mystery of faith: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

We pray for the gift of your Spirit: in our gathering; within this meal; among your people; throughout the world. Blessing, praise, and thanks to you, holy God, through Christ Jesus, by your Spirit, in your church, without end. **Amen.**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us...

LORD'S PRAYER

**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.

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

*All are invited into a time of reflection before they receive communion. During this time, you may prepare your hearts to receive the sacrament. Once ready, you may commune yourself and those around you with the bread and wine/grape juice. A representative from each household may say the following—bread: “**The body of Christ given for you.**” Wine/grape juice: “**The blood of Christ shed for you.**”*

COMMUNION HYMNS*“What Wondrous Love Is This”*

ELW 666

“Let Streams of Living Justice”

ELW 710

“Christ, Be Our Light”

ELW 715

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep in his grace, now and forever.

Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION - *All speak the prayer together.*

God of the abundant table, you have refreshed our hearts in this meal with bread for the journey. Give us your grace on the road that we might serve our neighbors with joy; for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

COMMENDATION

Let us commend Zach to the mercy of God, our maker and redeemer.

Into your hands, O merciful Savior, we commend your servant Zach. Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming. Receive him into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light.

Amen.

BENEDICTION

May the Lord bless you, may the Lord keep you, the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and grant you his peace. In the name of the Father, the † Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Lord, You Give the Great Commission

ELW 579

1 Lord, you give the great com - mis - sion: "Heal the sick and
 2 Lord, you call us to your ser - vice: "In my name bap -
 3 Lord, you make the com - mon ho - ly: "This my bod - y,
 4 Lord, you show us love's true mea - sure: "Fa - ther, what they
 5 Lord, you bless with words as - sur - ing: "I am with you

preach the word." Lest the church ne - glect its mis - sion,
 tize and teach." That the world may trust your prom - ise,
 this my blood." Let us all, for earth's true glo - ry,
 do, for - give." Yet we hoard as pri - vate trea - sure
 to the end." Faith and hope and love re - stor - ing,

and the gos - pel go un - heard, help us wit - ness
 life a - bun - dant meant for each, give us all new
 dai - ly lift life heav - en - ward, ask - ing that the
 all that you so free - ly give. May your care and
 may we serve as you in - tend and, a - mid the

to your pur - pose with re - newed in - teg - ri - ty:
 fer - vor, draw us clos - er in com - mu - ni - ty:
 world a - round us share your chil - dren's lib - er - ty:
 mer - cy lead us to a just so - ci - e - ty:
 cares that claim us, hold in mind e - ter - ni - ty:

Refrain

With the Spir - it's gifts em - pow'r us for the work of min - is - try.

Postlude

Hannah Lee

Join us this Saturday at 10:30 AM for Pastor Zach's Memorial Service via Zoom. Check in a few minutes early and hear the prelude. You may also join us on Facebook Live.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/95007590439?pwd=M2NmMUZCZzhMOUY0SG8xeHpzcU5RUT09>

Meeting ID: 950 0759 0439

Passcode: worship

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**The Rev. Zachary William Johnson
June 10, 1984 - September 1, 2023**

The Rev. Zachary "Zach" William Johnson completed his earthly baptismal journey on September 1, 2023, upon passing away unexpectedly at his home in Santa Clarita, CA.

Zach was born on June 10, 1984, to parents Gary L. Johnson and Sara Beth Akre, in Watford City, ND. On August 19, 1984, he was welcomed into the body of Christ through holy baptism at the Akre family's home congregation, Bethel Lutheran Church, Brush Prairie, WA.

As a young child, Zach was friendly, outgoing, loving, creative, kind-hearted, energetic, joyful, goofy, curious, and spirited. Fortunately, for those who knew and loved him, he continued to exemplify these characteristics well into adulthood.

Zach was a 2002 graduate of Lake Mills High School, a 2007 graduate of the University of Northern Iowa, and a 2012 graduate of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.

While in middle school and high school, Zach was involved in a variety of activities; his favorite activities included chorus, musicals, speech club, science club, student council, baseball, and golf. During middle school, he also participated in the confirmation program at Bethany Lutheran Church in Joice, IA, where he celebrated his affirmation of baptism on April 26, 1998. In addition to his high school activities, he enjoyed serving in worship and participating in the choir and youth group at Salem Lutheran Church in Lake Mills, IA. In 2002, Zach enrolled as a choral music education major at the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls, IA. While at UNI, he participated in multiple choral ensembles and was also active in worship and fellowship activities at the Lutheran Student Center. As a summer camp counselor, he began actively discerning how God was calling him to use his gifts in service to the Church and to the world and eventually felt called to become a pastor.

After almost 7 years of dating, Zach finally married his high school sweetheart Kristin (Sletten) on May 13, 2006. They lived in Waterloo, IA, until moving to Chicago in 2008, when Zach enrolled at the

Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. He absolutely loved studying, exploring, and living in Chicago. On July 15, 2012, Zach was ordained into the ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) at Zion Lutheran Church in Dysart, IA. He was blessed to serve as pastor at Faith Lutheran Church, Evansville, MN; St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Cedar Rapids, IA; and Hill Avenue Grace Lutheran Church, Pasadena, CA. He loved being a pastor and enjoyed many ministry activities especially presiding in worship, preaching, teaching through Bible studies, and providing pastoral care.

In addition to his pastoral vocation, one of the other vocations Zach most enjoyed and appreciated was his calling as Dad/Daddy. Some of his favorite dad/daddy-daughter activities were swimming, cooking, baking, laughing together at jokes and puns, watching TV and movies, playing board games and video games, and going to baseball games. Whenever possible, he was also grateful for the opportunity to take the girls to the beach, his “happy place.”

In late 2020, Zach was diagnosed with a rare neurological disorder, Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyneuropathy (CIDP), which caused him chronic pain, muscle loss, weakness, foot drop, and severe fatigue. Despite multiple setbacks, he endured and demonstrated great courage, strength/vulnerability, and patience. Around the same time of his CIDP diagnosis, Zach learned that he would eventually experience kidney failure and would need dialysis and/or a kidney transplant in the years ahead. On December 14, 2022, he was given new life when he and Kristin participated in a kidney paired donation. Both he and Kristin were grateful for the experience and for this new chapter in their journey together. For almost 9 months, Zach and family enjoyed an improved quality of life – even taking a family road trip to the Midwest this past spring.

Just a few months prior to his death, Zach was blessed with the opportunity to plan and lead Bible studies on disability justice at the Southwest California Synod assembly. As a pastor with disabilities, he felt called by God to help the Church and society understand the need for improved accessibility and to present a different approach to understanding the healing stories in the gospels. He spoke openly about his experience as a person with disabilities and eventually embraced it as part of his identity, who God created him to be.

Zach was an avid fan of the Green Bay Packers, the Minnesota Twins, the Cedar Rapids Kernels, and the UNI Panthers. He was also a self-described choral music nerd, Star Wars geek, liturgy nerd, and a gamer. But, first and foremost, he would describe himself as a beloved child of God, broken yet made whole in Christ, forgiven and freed to share God’s love and grace with others. While living in the Pacific Northwest, Zach developed a special connection with the coast and with the ocean. This connection to the water continued to be an essential part of Zach’s identity as a person, as a pastor, and more specifically, as a baptized child of God.

Those left to cherish his memory and continue his legacy include his wife Kristin and daughters Katherine and Rosalie; parents, the Rev. Gary L. Johnson and Luann Alemao-Johnson; brother Garrett Johnson; sister Jessamyn Johnson and nephew Jonas Duffy; brother Andrew Alemao; parents-in-law James and Dagmar Sletten; sister-in-law Adrienne (Jason) Hancock; brother-in-law Ryan (Megan) Sletten; his extended family of aunts, uncles, and cousins; many dear friends and colleagues; and his beloved dog Snickers. He was preceded in death by his mother, the Rev. Sara Beth Akre; grandparents Ezra “Pat” and Irene Johnson, C.W. “Bill” and Virginia “Ginny” Akre, Elaine Akre, and Francis and Mary Lou Costa; uncle and godfather William “Buck” Akre; and his beloved cat Izzy.

In memory of Zach, please consider registering as an organ, eye, and tissue donor (<https://registerme.org>) and share your wishes with your loved ones. Also, if you feel so moved by the Spirit, please consider becoming a living kidney donor (<https://www.kidneyregistry.org/for-donors/>).

Rest eternal, grant him, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon him.