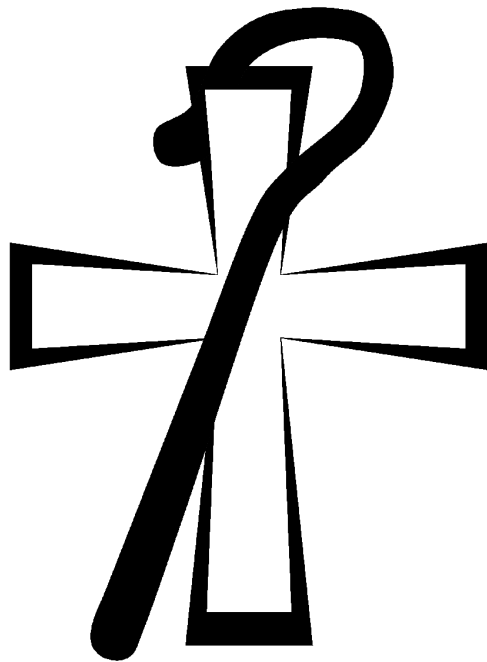


**Faith Formation Festival
Closing Prayers and
Candle Lighting**



May 5, 2023

4:45 pm

Closing Prayers and Candle Lighting


Reading: Hebrews 12:1-2

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, ²looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

P Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we ask that the living for whom we light candles may be healed in body, mind, and soul. We ask that our beloved dead, for whom we also light candles, may be held in your eternal embrace. We confess our hope in “the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting,” granted through your dear Son. Give us grace to firmly believe, boldly confess, and lovingly share the hope that, through Jesus, always exists, perseveres, and conquers darkness, even in the face of sorrow, suffering or death.

C **Amen.**

 *As we light candles for those God has laid on our hearts, as well as those who have gone before us, we remember the words from Hebrews 12:1, “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses.” If you would like to light a candle for someone, please come forward, take the taper and light one of the votive candles. After all have lit candles:*



P Heavenly Father, you know, deeply and personally, all those for whom we lit candles. You know how our hearts ache for the hurt your people endure, especially children, youth, and their families. Heal them as only you can do. Lord, in your mercy,

C **Hear our prayer.**

P Thank you for our dear ones who have gone before us and rest from their labors. The candles we light are a tiny reflection of the glory they now behold in our Savior’s face! May we walk with Jesus, even in dark-shadowed valleys, as they did throughout their earthly life.

Lord, in your mercy,

C **Hear our prayer.**

P God of all comfort, we commend unto you all who are in any way afflicted, oppressed with poverty, sickness, or other trouble of body or sorrow of mind. Grant them the consolation they need, and overrule their present sufferings to their eternal good. We also give you thanks for all your saints, martyrs, and confessors; for your faithful servants who in their lives have given the good confession of their faith; and for all dear to us whom you have taken into your nearer presence. Grant us grace to follow them as they followed Christ. Bring us, with them, to those things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, which you have prepared for those who love you. This we ask through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen.**

HYMN

"Love Diving, All Loves Excelling"

1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of
 2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to
 3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us
 4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion, pure and

heav'n, to earth come down! Fix in us thy
 ev - 'ry trou - bled breast; let us all in
 all thy life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re -
 spot - less let us be; let us see thy

hum - ble dwell - ing, all thy faith - ful mer - cies crown.
 thee in - her - it; let us find thy prom - ised rest.
 turn, and nev - er, nev - er - more thy tem - ples leave.
 great sal - va - tion per - fect - ly re - stored in thee!

Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion, pure, un -
 Take a - way the love of sin - ning; Al - pha
 Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing, serve thee
 Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry, till in

bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with
 and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as
 as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee
 heav'n we take our place, till we cast our

thy sal - va - tion, en - ter ev - 'ry trem - bling heart.
 its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
 with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.
 crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise!

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
 The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.
 The Lord look upon you with favor and † grant you peace.

C Amen.

Acknowledgements

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Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church has been serving the Westerville community for more than 108 years, supporting local ministries such as the Westerville Area Resource Ministry, Westerville Partnership Habitat for Humanity, and Westerville CROP Walk. Grace also supports Lutheran Social Services programs like Faith Mission and provides weekly meeting space for four AA groups.

Vision Statement: We envision Grace to be a welcoming Christ-centered community of faith, inviting all, growing in discipleship, sharing in ministries.

Mission Statement: Our mission is to reach out with the love of Jesus to grow disciples and serve our community.