

**Celebration of Life**  
**Vera Ryen Gregg**

**\* 5 May 1943    26 March 2025 †**



**11 May 2025, 1 p.m.**

**University Lutheran Church**  
**66 Winthrop St., Cambridge, Mass.**  
[unilu.org](http://unilu.org)

## PRELUDE

“Beautiful Savior” [SCHÖNSTER HERR JESU] — Silesian folk tune (19th century); setting by Charles W. Ore (b. 1936)

“Pie Jesu” from *Requiem in D minor*, Op. 48 — Gabriel Fauré (1845–1924)

## GATHERING

### BELL AND WELCOME

Alleluia! Christ is risen. **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

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 sister Vera, to give thanks for her life, to commend her to our merciful redeemer, and to comfort one another in our grief.

### GATHERING HYMN ELW 627 “O Day Full of Grace” (*Den signede Dag*)



- 1 O day full of grace that now we see ap - pear - ing on
- 2 O day full of grace, O bless - ed time, our Lord on the
- 3 For Christ bore our sins, and not his own, when he on the
- 4 God came to us then at Pen - te - cost, the Spir - it new
- 5 When we on that fi - nal jour - ney go that Christ is for



earth's ho - ri - zon, bring light from our God that we may  
earth ar - riv - ing; then came to the world that light sub -  
cross was hang - ing; and then he a - rose and moved the  
life re - veal - ing, that we might no more in death be  
us pre - par - ing, we'll gath - er in song, our hearts a -



be a - bun - dant in joy this sea - son. God, shine for us  
lime, great joy for us all re - triev - ing; for Je - sus all  
stone, that we, un - to him be - long - ing, might join with an -  
lost, its pow'r o - ver us dis - pel - ling. This flame will the  
glow, all joy of the heav - ens shar - ing, and there we will



now in this dark place; your name on our hearts em - bla - zon.  
mor - tals did em - brace, all shame and des - pair re - mov - ing.  
gel - ic hosts to raise our voic - es in end - less sing - ing.  
mark of sin ef - face and bring to us all true heal - ing.  
join God's end - less praise, with an - gels and saints a - dor - ing.

Text: Scandinavian folk hymn; tr. Gerald Thorson, 1921–2001, alt.

Music: DEN SIGNEDE DAG, Christoph E. F. Weyse, 1774–1842

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## APOSTOLIC 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.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

O God of grace and glory, we remember before you today our sister Vera. We thank you for giving her 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.**

## WORD

**FIRST READING** Romans 8:31–35, 37–39

A reading from Romans.

<sup>31</sup>What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? <sup>32</sup>He 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? <sup>33</sup>Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup>Who 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. <sup>35</sup>Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? <sup>37</sup>No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup>For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup>nor 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.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM** Psalm 23 — as “*dedicated to my mother*” by Bobby McFerrin; sung by members of Cantilena, the chorus Vera sang with for many years

<sup>1</sup>The LORD is my shepherd;  
I shall not be in want.

<sup>2</sup>The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures  
and leads me beside still waters.

<sup>3</sup>You restore my soul, O LORD,  
and guide me along right pathways for your name’s sake.

<sup>4</sup>Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I shall fear no evil;  
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

<sup>5</sup>You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

<sup>6</sup>Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

**REMEMBRANCES** *Dina Ryen Gregg, Ella B. Fossum,  
Karen Nichols, Niels LaCour, and Anika Ryen Gregg*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** ELW 753

**Dona nobis pacem**

1 *Canon*



Do - na no - bis pa - cem, pa - cem. Do - na no - bis pa - cem.

2



Do - na no - bis pa - cem. Do - na no - bis pa - cem.

3



Do - na no - bis pa - cem. Do - na no - bis pa - cem.

Text: Traditional

Music: DONA NOBIS PACEM, traditional

**GOSPEL** John 1:1–5

The holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**HOMILY** *Pastor Carrie Ballenger*



## My Life Flows On in Endless Song



- 1 My life flows on in end - less song; a - bove earth's lam-en - ta - tion,
- 2 Through all the tu - mult and the strife, I hear that mu-sic ring - ing.
- 3 What though my joys and com-forts die? The Lord my Sav-ior liv - eth.
- 4 The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a foun - tain ev - er spring-ing!



I catch the sweet, though far-off hymn that hails a new cre - a - tion.  
It finds an ech - o in my soul. How can I keep from sing-ing?  
What though the dark - ness gath-er round? Songs in the night he giv - eth.  
All things are mine since I am his! How can I keep from sing-ing?

### *Refrain*



No storm can shake my in-most calm while to that Rock I'm cling-ing.



Since Christ is Lord of heav-en and earth, how can I keep from sing-ing?

Text: Robert Lowry, 1826–1899

Music: HOW CAN I KEEP FROM SINGING, Robert Lowry, alt.



## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Let us pray.

*A brief silence is kept.*

. . . God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

. . . God of all grace, we give you thanks because by his death our Savior Jesus Christ destroyed the power of death and by his resurrection he opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Make us certain that because he lives we shall live also, and that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come, will be able to separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**God our Mother, God 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.**

## SENDING

### COMMENDATION

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

*Silence is kept.*

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

### BLESSING

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, make you complete in everything good so that you may do God's will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in God's sight; through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. **Amen.**

### DISMISSAL

Let us go forth in peace,  
**in the name of Christ. Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN** “Beautiful Savior” — Melody from the 12th century, arranged by F. Melius Christiansen, St. Olaf Choir Series

*The assembly is invited to hum the first verse along with the choir and to join in singing the second and third verses as desired.*

Fair are the meadows,  
Fairer the woodlands,  
Robed in flowers of blooming spring;  
Jesus is fairer,  
Jesus is purer,  
He makes our sorrowing spirits sing.

Beautiful Savior!  
Lord of all nations!  
Son of God and Son of Man!  
Glory and honor,  
Praise, adoration,  
Now and forevermore be Thine.  
  
Now and forevermore be Thine!

*In lieu of flowers, Vera’s family request donations be made to Cantilena, A Women’s Chorus (visit [cantilena.org](http://cantilena.org)).*

**SERVING TODAY**

*Presiding Minister and Preacher:* Carrie Ballenger

*Assisting Minister:* Gracious Moyo

*Musicians:* Imogene Stulken, Lorraine Fitzmaurice, the UniLu Choir, and Cantilena.

## **SERVING THE COMMUNITY**

Carrie Ballenger, *Pastor*

Gracious Moyo, *Associate Pastor*

Laurel Oberstadt-Petrik, *Ministry Intern*

Kristian Kohler, *Office Administrator*

Lorraine Fitzmaurice, *Music Director—Choir / Building Manager*

Imogene Stulken, *Music Director—Organ*

Hanqi Zhang, *Tech Verger*

Mary Pederson Metelmann, *Council President*

Ed Bucher, *Treasurer and Bookkeeper*

Gail Bucher, *Service Deacon*

Chris Porter, *Financial Secretary*

Susan Worst, *Webmaster*

Joyce DeGreeff, *Lutheran Chaplain at Northeastern University*

Andrew Heisen, *Lutheran Chaplain at MIT*

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**Welcome to University Lutheran Church, a Christian witness and ministry of and to members of the academic and wider communities in Cambridge-Boston — and, virtually, across the world! We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation, welcoming people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. We are also a member congregation of the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO).**

***Land Acknowledgment:*** *University Lutheran Church is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Pawtucket and Massa-adchu-es-et (Massachusetts) peoples, and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have called, and who continue to call, this land their home.*