

Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost



October 5, 2025 10:30 AM
Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church



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Rev. Doug Hefner cell: (980) 234-8848 email: pastorhefner@aol.com
Sandi Tallant – Organist Todd Childers – Administrative Assistant
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 9am to 1pm
Tuesday and Thursday 12pm to 4pm

WELCOME TO ALL WHO WORSHIP at Grace Church this morning as we gather to worship the Father, + Son and Holy Spirit in truth. As you entered the sanctuary today, you received this bulletin containing the order for worship and announcements. Please also notice the Prayer List where you will find a listing of all the known prayer concerns. You are invited to use this as a guide for your personal prayers throughout the coming week. If you need information about our congregation or if you'd like to update your information, make sure to fill out the yellow Worship Today Form and place it in the offering plate at the time of the offering. If you have a prayer concern, indicate that on your Worship Today Form at the bottom or on the reverse side. If you are seeking a Church Home or would like more information about Grace, please contact Pastor Doug (980) 234-8848.

***Stand** *Hymnals in Pew Rack: LBW = Green WOV = Blue TCH = Burgundy*

PRELUDE *Please observe silence for meditation and prayer.*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*** BRIEF ORDER OF CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

P: In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: God of all mercy and consolation, come to the aid of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that, attentive to your Word, we may confess our sins, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

P: Trusting in God's steadfast love, grace and forgiveness in Christ, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection and confession of our sins before God and one another.

P: Merciful Father,

C: we have sinned against You and one another. We do not fully live as Your beloved daughters and sons. We use Your gifts to our own ends and neglect your call to bear fruit in Your world. Look upon us in mercy and forgive us all our offenses, and cleanse us from proud thoughts and empty desires. By your grace draw us near to you, our refuge and our strength; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The minister stands and addresses the congregation.

P: We are reconciled to God through Christ; for His sake, God does not count our trespasses against us. Once dead in sin, we are now alive to God. Once lost, we now are found. God clothes us in the finest robe of all, the righteousness of Jesus Christ our Lord, so that we can celebrate the joy of our salvation. In the mercy of almighty God, Christ

died for us while we were sinners and through Christ, God has granted us the entire forgiveness of all our sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

* **GATHERING HYMN** “Let the Whole Creation Cry”

LBW 242

* **GREETING**

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **C: And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Almighty God, you have taught us in your Son that love fulfills the law. Inspire us to love you with all our heart, our soul, our mind, and our strength, and teach us how to love our neighbor as ourselves, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

The congregation may be seated.

FIRST READING: Exodus 20:1-21

And God spoke all these words, saying,

² “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

³ “You shall have no other gods before me.

⁴ “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments. ⁷ “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. ⁸ “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. ¹¹ For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

¹² “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. ¹³ “You shall not murder. ¹⁴ “You shall not commit adultery. ¹⁵ “You shall not steal.

¹⁶ “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

¹⁷ “You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.”

¹⁸ Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off ¹⁹ and said to Moses, “You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die.” ²⁰ Moses said to the people, “Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin.” ²¹ The people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.

L: The Word of the Lord. C: Thanks be to God

PSALM 119: 10-18

¹⁰ With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments!

¹¹ I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

¹² Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your statutes!

¹³ With my lips I declare all the rules^[s] of your mouth.

¹⁴ In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches.

¹⁵ I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways.

¹⁶ I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.

¹⁷ Deal bountifully with your servant, that I may live and keep your word.

¹⁸ Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.

¹⁹ I am a sojourner on the earth; hide not your commandments from me!

SECOND READING: Romans: 7:14-25a, 8:1-4

¹⁴ We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. ¹⁵ I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. ¹⁶ And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸ For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

²¹ So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within

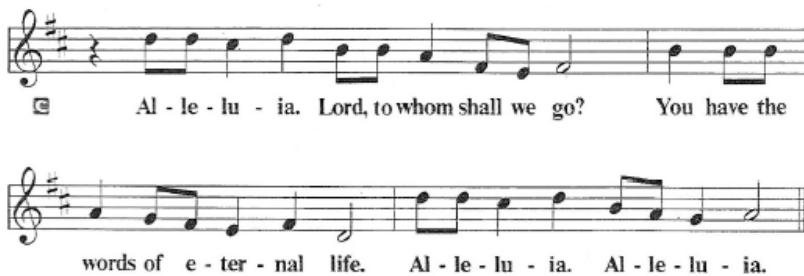
me.²⁴ What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?²⁵ Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

8 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.³ For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh,⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

L: The Word of the Lord. C: **Thanks be to God**

The congregation is invited to stand.

*** GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** “Alleluia, Lord to Whom Shall We Go”



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: Matthew 5: 17-30**

P: The holy gospel according to St. Matthew. C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. 19 Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

21 “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ 22 But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his

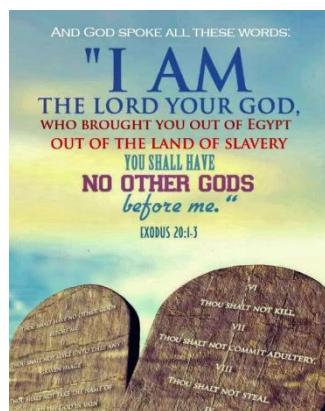
brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults^[d] his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell^[e] of fire. ²³ So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵ Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. ²⁶ Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

²⁷ “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ ²⁸ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹ If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. ³⁰ And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

L: The Gospel of the Lord. C: Praise to You O Christ!
The congregation may be seated.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON



“The Purpose of the Law and the Promise of the Gospel”
Pastor Doug

Romans 7:24-25a “What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!”

***HYMN OF THE DAY** “Just As I Am, Without One Plea” (verses 1-5) LBW 296

***THE APOSTLES' CREED**

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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**

Response at the end of each petition. P: Lord in your mercy, C: Hear our prayer.

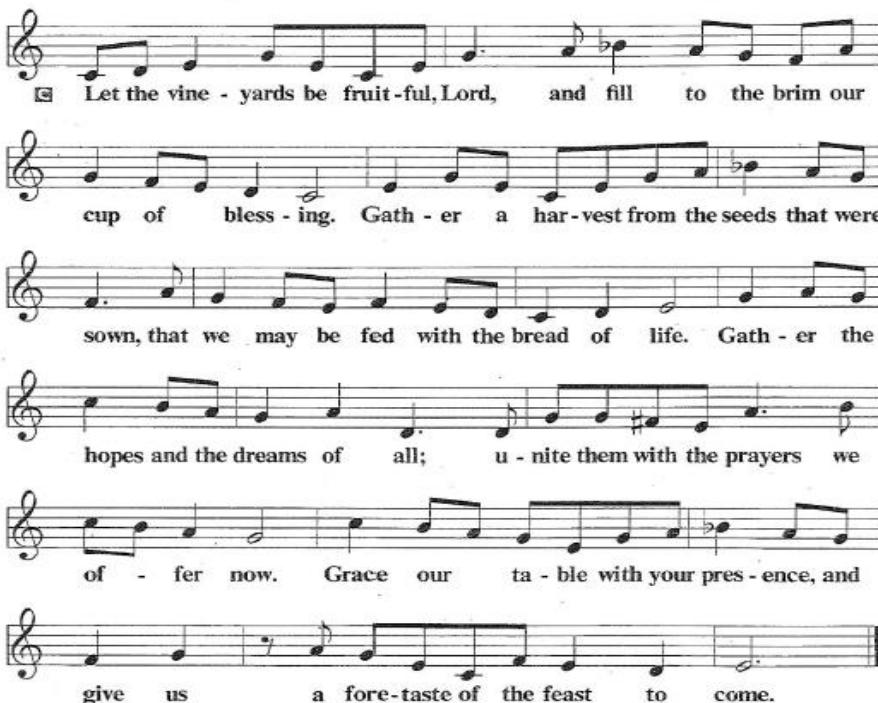
***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always. C: And also with you.

Worshipers may greet one another with "the Peace of Christ."

The assembly may be seated.

*** OFFERING In response to God's blessings, we offer our tithes to the Lord**
HOLY COMMUNION – MEAL OF GRACE



Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our
cup of bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were
sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the
hopes and the dreams of all; u - nite them with the prayers we
of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your pres - ence, and
give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

* **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

P: Let us pray. God of all creation, all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine.

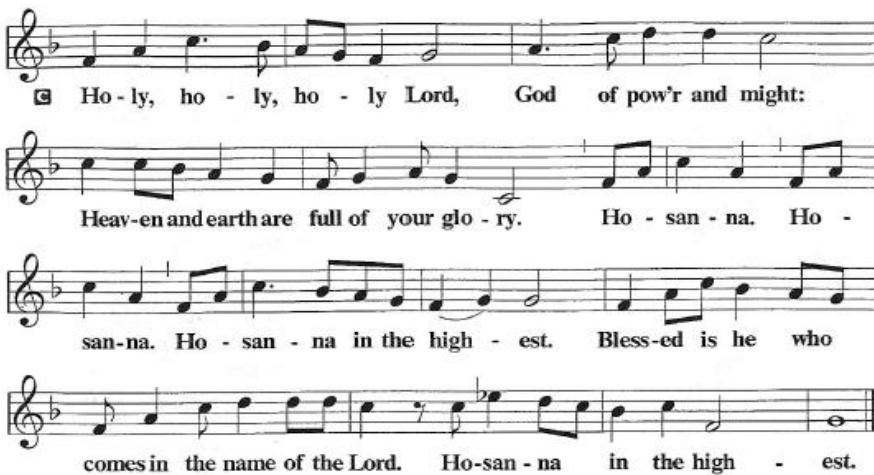
C: Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence and love in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

***DIALOGUE AND PREFACE**

P: The Lord be with you. **C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts. **C: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.**



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.

* **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

* **LORD'S PRAYER**

* **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P: The Gifts of God for the People of God. **C: Thanks be to God!**

The assembly may be seated.

All are invited to receive Holy Communion.

COMMUNION SONG

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.

The congregation is invited to stand.

* COMMUNION BLESSING AND PRAYER

P: Let us pray. Gracious God, in this meal you have drawn us to your heart, and nourished us at your table with food and drink, the body and blood of Christ. Now send us forth to be your people in the world, and to proclaim your truth and love this day and evermore, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

* BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace. Amen.

***SENDING HYMN “My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less”**

LBW 293

*DISMISSAL

P: There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus! Set free in Christ let us go in peace and joy to love the Lord and our neighbor! **C: Thanks be to God!**

ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the Glory of God in memory of Robert and Della Heavner by David and Belinda Wilfong.



In the Grace Church Family:

Jeffry Bivens, Rick & Cindy Bivens, Glenda Childers, Pat Dietz, Lisa Childers Fox, Allen and Kay Hatchett, Larry Heavner, Lorene Heavner, Larry & Brenda Jarrett, Martha Johnson, Faye Lane, Phil & Malinda Leatherman, Tim Leatherman, Betty Matheson, Joe Momier, Jane Moss, Christine Norman, Michael

Norman, Tricia and Dan Panek, Mike, Debi & Stephen Pisko, Helen Smith, Ethan Starnes, Sandi Tallant, Libby Travis, Shirley Warlick, Ken & Tirzah Welch, Scott & Carolyn Whisnant, Nancy Willis, and Martha Young.

Nursing Home: Juanita Haas (Trinity Village), Ted Whisnant (Trinity Village), Harvey Leatherman (Trinity Ridge)

Friends and Relatives in our Prayers: Pray for Peace in Israel and the World, New Covenant Lutheran Mission Church, Terry Barnett, Daniel Baucom, Ashlee Bumgardner, Jessica Cassels & Family, Clinton Childers, Evelyn Childers, Elizabeth Frye, family of Barbara Jarrett, Thurman McCaslin, Ryan McMullen, Randy & Rita Neill, Eric Phillips, Wayne & Brenda Reed, Anita Sabino, and Scott Speagle. Prayers for world peace and for our church, the United States of America, and especially the families of those who have given their lives in the service of our country and those who continue to protect our freedoms and for all members of our Armed Forces

COMING UP AT GRACE THIS WEEK

Today: Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost

3:00pm – Catawba County Hunger Walk – Downtown Newton

Wednesday 6:30pm – Vespers with Bible Study on the Five Solas – Solus Christus
“Christ Alone”

Saturday 9:00am - Grace Prayer Breakfast at Four Peas in a Pod – Conover

HAPPY OCTOBER BIRTHDAY TO:

October 1 – Pastor Doug Hefner
October 7 – Debra Hefner
October 9 – Don Jarrett
October 9 – Emilee Bumgardner
October 10 – Cooper Johnson
October 13 – Allen Hatchett
October 25 – Matt Speagle

- October 3 – Juanita Haas
- October 7 – Stephen Pisko
- October 9 – Jason Yoder
- October 10 – Joy Heavner
- October 13 – Todd Childers
- October 19 – Riley Leatherman
- October 28 – Todd Setzer

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 12 at 5pm Blessing of the Pets Service (Shelter weather permitting) We will have a short service and a blessing for all the pets. Catawba Humane Society representative will be invited and we will receive an offering to benefit the care they provide pets in our area.

October 26 Reformation Sunday

October 26 Trunk or Treat Outreach Event with Hot Dogs for Community 5-7pm
See Pastor Doug if you would like to help; everyone is encouraged to participate so that we can reach out to our community with the love of Jesus.

October 26 Ordering for Christmas Poinsettias begins.

November 2 All Saints Day Service – we will remember and give thanks for all the Saints, especially those members who have died in the past year and are now with the Lord.

November 16 –Deadline for Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes

November 23 Sunday Thanksgiving Service at Grace

November 23 Deadline to order Christmas Poinsettias.

November 26 Community Thanksgiving Service (Location TBA), Wednesday

November 29 Hanging of the Greens 10:00 am

November 30 First Sunday of Advent

December 3, 10, 17 Midweek Advent Services 6:30 pm

December 24 (Wed.) Christmas Eve – Candlelight & Holy Communion 7:00 pm

CATAWBA COUNTY HUNGER WALK TODAY

Catawba County Hunger Walk: You can sign up to be a walker at <https://www.thecornerstable.org/hunger-walk> and join the Grace Lutheran Church team. Or you can show up today at the walk and register in person (registration 2-2:45pm). If you can't walk, please consider making a donation that goes to the Corner Table, Hickory Soup Kitchen, and Ashure Ministries. We will receive a special offering during the announcements so that we can take this offering to the walk. Checks can be made out to Catawba Co Hunger Walk. Cash donations are great too. All gifts will be placed under the Grace Lutheran Church team. Let us share our bountiful blessings with those in need!

Ministers of Grace – All the People of Grace

Pastor – Reverend Doug Hefner Board President – Tim Eckard

Lector – Todd Childers Youth Leader – Stormy Shull

Altar Preparation – Cindy Bivens Communion Assistants – Cindy Bivens & Lula Ingle

Ushers – Chris Jarrett & Jack Parris

Offering Counters – Todd Childers & Jason Yoder

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Has a child ever taught you to play a game? They tend to make the rules as they go along. Just when something is about to go wrong, the child interrupts with a new rule. They tell you to jump three times on one foot and then turn around in circles until they can do what they need to do to win. An exaggeration perhaps, but most adults will nod in agreement. While game playing is a way to teach children how to follow rules, sometimes it is fun to let them play the games their way. We don't always have to win, do we? The key to being a good parent is to learn the balance between fun and training. We learn to pick our battles. Children have to learn how to lose, but does it have to happen during a game of Candy Land? Playtime can have a much more important purpose: to build relationships.

It is important to establish a relationship with a child in those early years, to build trust even before rules are established. We see this in the relationship of God with His people. God had been in a relationship with His people for a very long time, but they had lived in Egypt for four hundred years. While there was a memory of the God of Abraham, they had lost touch with Him. They were like children who needed to learn to trust His voice again.

God sent Moses to restore the relationship and deliver them into freedom. God saved them and led them through the desert toward the Promised Land. They learned that He is a deliverer and provider. They witnessed God's hand at work. He proved that He is trustworthy. God used the journey to build the relationship; He loved them and they learned to love Him.

The rules given at Sinai are not burdensome; they are a gift given to help us be right with God and our neighbors. They begin by establishing God's place in our lives. "I am the Lord your God." The rest of the commandments build trust between people. As we dwell in that right relationship with God, He transforms our nature so that we will be His people, obedient to His Word and in relationship to one another.