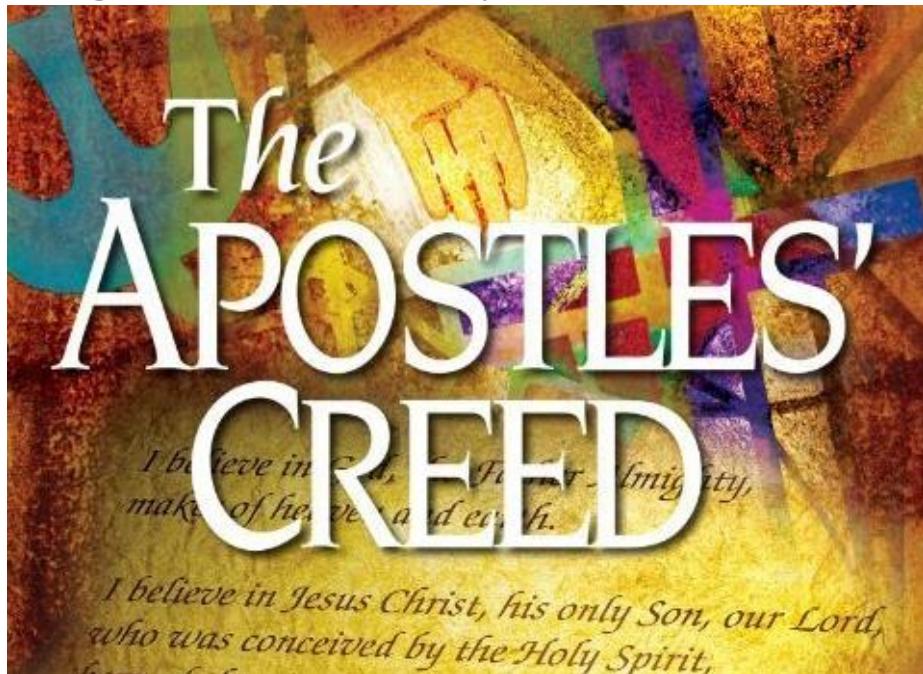


Eighteenth Sunday After Pentecost



October 12, 2025 10:30 AM

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church



4536 Hickory Lincolnton Highway, Newton, North Carolina 28658

Church Office: (704) 462-1035 email: gracenalcnewton@aol.com
www.gracelutheran-newton.org

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: God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through our Lord's death and resurrection, Christ has defeated death and sin, reconciled us to God and one another, and made us his own beloved sons and daughters. Led by the Holy Spirit, who grants freedom and newness of life, let us rejoice in the Good News that 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.**

C: Amen.

* **GATHERING HYMN** “Father Most Holy”

LBW 169

* **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 Creator and ever-living God: we worship your glory, eternal Three-in-One, and we praise your power, majestic One-in-Three. Keep us steadfast in this faith, defend us in all adversity, and bring us at last into your presence, where you live in endless joy and love, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen

The congregation may be seated.

FIRST READING: Genesis 1: 26-31

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” ²⁹ And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. ³⁰ And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. ³¹ And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

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

PSALM 103: 8-13

⁸ The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

⁹ **He will not always chide,
nor will he keep his anger forever.**

¹⁰ He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities.

¹¹For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;
¹²as far as the east is from the west,
so far does he remove our transgressions from us.
¹³As a father shows compassion to his children,
so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him.

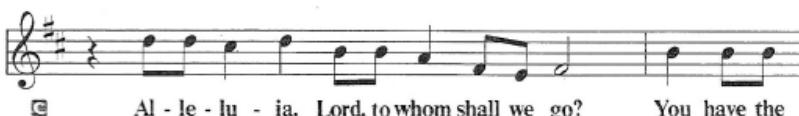
SECOND READING: Colossians: 1: 9-20

⁹For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. ¹¹May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully ¹²giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. ¹³He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. ¹⁵He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; ¹⁶for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers — all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. ¹⁹For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

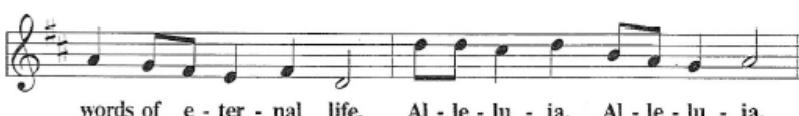
L: The Word of the Lord. C: Thanks be to God

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.

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

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ² This man came to Jesus^[a] by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.” ³ Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” ⁴ Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?” ⁵ Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” ⁹ Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰ Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? ¹¹ Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. ¹² If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

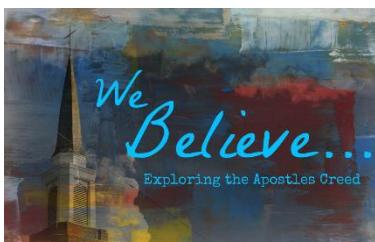
L: The Gospel of the Lord. C: **Praise to You O Christ!**

The congregation may be seated.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON

Luther's Small Catechism Sermon Series Part 2, The Apostles' Creed



“I believe in God the Father Who Created Me, in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, Our Lord Who Has Redeemed Me, and the Holy Spirit Who Sanctifies Me!”

Pastor Doug Hefner

as Father, Son and Holy Spirit in God's Holy Word.

***HYMN OF THE DAY** “How Great Thou Art”

LBW 532

***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

* **OFFERTORY** Let the Vineyards



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

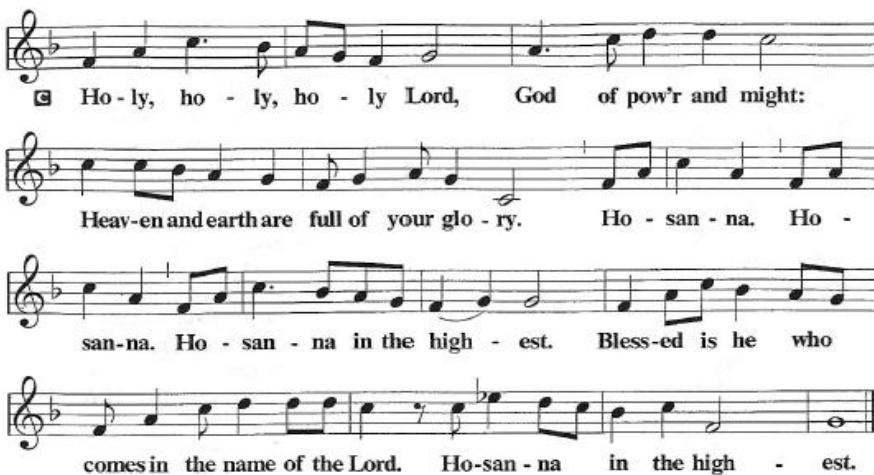
P: Holy and loving God, Three in One, Blessed Trinity, C: Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we here offer to you, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior 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
mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the
world; have mercy 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: Eternal and majestic Trinity, you are our source of life, our redeemer, and our liberating power. Thank you for feeding us with the True Bread from Heaven, Jesus Christ our Lord. May Christ's presence nourish our faith through the Holy Spirit as we are empowered for mission, baptizing and teaching in your blessed name, so that all may worship you to the end of the age through Jesus Christ our 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 “Come, Gracious Spirit, Heavenly Dove”**

LBW 475

*DISMISSAL

P: Rejoice friends in the Good News of the Gospel! We are loved and embraced by God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit! Let us go forth to live and share the Good News of God's love for us, in us and with us! **C: Thanks be to God!**

ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the Glory of God and in honor and appreciation of Pastor Doug Hefner by the people of Grace Church.



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, Harvey Leatherman, 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)

Friends and Relatives in our Prayers: Pray for Peace in Israel and the World, New Covenant Lutheran Mission Church, Terry Barnett, Daniel Baucom, David 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: Eighteenth Sunday After Pentecost

9:30am – Sunday School 10:30am - Worship Celebration

5:00pm – Blessing of the Pets at the picnic shelter area.

Wednesday 6:30pm – Vespers with Bible Study on the Five Solas – Sola Gratia “Grace Alone”

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 2 Annual Congregational Meeting

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



Blessing of the Animals

you can't bring your pet, please bring a picture and they will be blessed and prayed for at the service. If you have a pet that has died in the last number of years, we will remember the pets we have lost. Please bring a picture to share. We hope to have someone from the Catawba Humane Society to tell us about their work for pets in our county. We will also receive an offering that will go to CHS to help pets in our area. Please invite friends, family, and neighbors.

Blessing of the Animals Service Today at 5pm

The Blessing of the Animals Service normally falls on the Festival Day of St. Francis of Assisi, who is considered the patron saint of animals (Oct. 4). Due to the Hunger Walk on Oct. 5, Grace will have the service on Oct. 12. Please bring your pet or farm animal for a blessing. If



Trunk or Treat on October 26 5-7pm

This is a Church-wide event; in other words, we need you to be a part of this. We need as many people as possible to open their car trunk or truck bed to decorate and hand out candy. Some decorate their trunks or have little games for the kids to play to get candy. After Trunk or Treat, we will have hot dogs, chips, and drink. We may also have the fire pit ready to do smores. We will see if we can get an inflatable to have fun with as well. If you would like to help with this event, please see the Youth and Family Ministry Team. We will have flyers made so that you can invite the community.

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

“WE ALL BELIEVE IN ONE TRUE GOD”

Martin Luther wrote this hymn to for us to reflect upon the glorious truth and grace of the Apostles' Creed. Here are the 3 verses found on LBW 374.

1 We all believe in one true God, Who created earth and heaven,

The Father, who to us in love Has the right of children given.

He in soul and body feeds us; All we need His hand provides us;

Through all snares and perils leads us, Watching that no harm betide us.

He cares for us by day and night; All things are governed by His might.

2 We all believe in Jesus Christ, His own Son, our Lord, possessing

An equal Godhead, throne, and might, Source of ev'ry grace and blessing;

Born of Mary, virgin mother, By the power of the Spirit,

Word made flesh, our elder brother; That the lost might life inherit,

Was crucified for all our sin And raised by God to life again.

3 We all confess the Holy Ghost, Who, in highest heaven dwelling

With God the Father and the Son, Comforts us beyond all telling;

Who the Church, His own creation, Keeps in unity of spirit.

Here forgiveness and salvation Daily come through Jesus' merit.

All flesh shall rise, and we shall be In bliss with God eternally.

The following is from Devotions based on the Hymns of Martin Luther by Rev. Scott Schilbe:
“See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are” (1 John 3:1). When you ponder God the Father, you likely think of the Father’s providence, of how He provides what you need to support your body and life. You think of material blessings, gifts Luther described in his explanation of the Creed’s First Article. But why does God provide for you? God provides for all your needs because you are His child. The child/Father relationship is God the Father’s gift to you. “The Father, who to us in love Has the right of children given” (st. 1). Born “not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man,” you are born “of God” (John 1:13), born of water and the Spirit (John 3:5). You are a child of the one true God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The status of God’s child means more than God providing for you, even more than Him leading you through all “snares and perils” (st. 1). The status of God’s child means that God, to save you from eternal death and hell, became your brother! For you, “born of Mary, virgin mother” (st. 2), your elder—eternal—brother was “crucified for all our sin And raised by God to life again” (st. 2). Moreover, the status of God’s child means that God constantly provides not just for your bodily needs but also for your spiritual needs. He provides this ongoing spiritual care because you—His child—continue to sin. That ongoing care results in God providing constant forgiveness in the Christian Church. “Here [in the Christian Church] forgiveness and salvation Daily come through Jesus’ merit” (st. 3). Your one true God has indeed shown His love. He created you. He provides for you. He saves you from sin. He blesses you with abundant forgiveness. He gives you these gifts because, out of love, He made you His child. Consequently, you now are free to love and serve your neighbor as a grateful response to God’s creation, redemption, and sanctification.