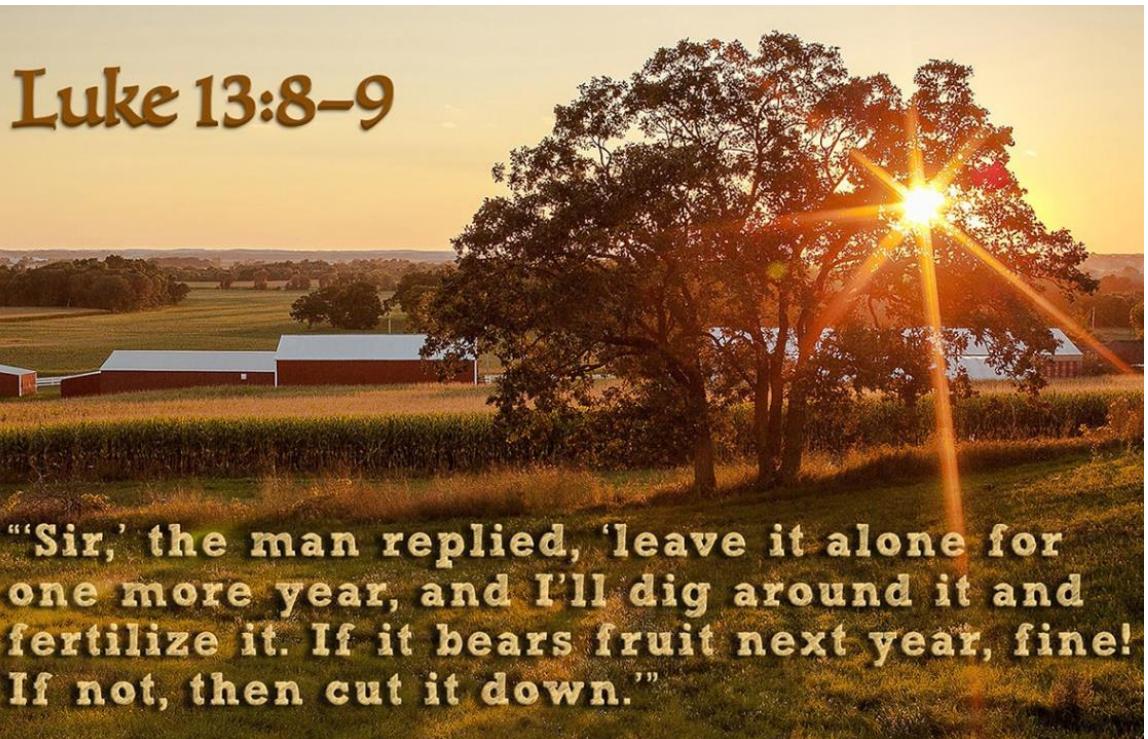


# Third Sunday in Lent

March 23, 2025      10:30 AM

**Luke 13:8-9**



**“Sir,’ the man replied, ‘leave it alone for one more year, and I’ll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.’”**

## Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church



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**[www.gracelutheran-newton.org](http://www.gracelutheran-newton.org)**

**Rev. Doug Hefner cell: (980) 234-8848 email: [pastorhefner@aol.com](mailto:pastorhefner@aol.com)**

**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**

*The congregation is invited to stand.*

**\* BRIEF ORDER OF CONFSSION AND FORGIVENESS**

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

**P** Blessed be the name of the Holy Trinity: the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen

**P** Heavenly Father, merciful and holy, in you we live and move and have our being. Look upon us, your children, the work of your hands. 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 and renew us in the power of your Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C** Amen

**P** Sisters and brothers, bear with one another in love, maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them in the light of Christ.(2 Corinthians 13:11) Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and one another trusting in the grace, mercy and forgiveness of Christ our Lord.

*Silence for reflection and self-examination.*

**P** Holy and gracious God,

**C We confess that we have not led a life worthy of the calling to which we have been called. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not acted according to your will. We have grieved your Holy Spirit. Have mercy on us and forgive us according to the riches of your grace. In Christ make us holy and blameless before you in love, so that we might live to the praise of your glory. Amen**

**P** Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C Amen**

**\*GATHERING HYMN    “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”**

**WOV 771**

**\* 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**

**P:** Everlasting God, draw us into this season of repentance and create within us fertile soil in which your Word bursts forth in lives marked by the abundant fruit of your grace; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever.

**C: Amen.**    *The congregation may be seated.*

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 5: 1-7**

Let me sing for my beloved my love song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill.<sup>2</sup> He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; and he looked for it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes.<sup>3</sup> And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard.<sup>4</sup> What more was there to do for my vineyard, that I have not done in it? When I looked for it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes?<sup>5</sup> And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.<sup>6</sup> I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and briars and thorns shall grow up; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.<sup>7</sup> For the vineyard of

the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are his pleasant planting; and he looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; for righteousness, but behold, an outcry!

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

### **Psalm 85: 1-13**

<sup>1</sup> Lord, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

**<sup>2</sup>You forgave the iniquity of your people; you covered all their sin.**

<sup>3</sup>You withdrew all your wrath; you turned from your hot anger.

**<sup>4</sup>Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away your indignation toward us!**

<sup>5</sup>Will you be angry with us forever? Will you prolong your anger to all generations?

**<sup>6</sup>Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you?**

<sup>7</sup>Show us your steadfast love, O Lord, and grant us your salvation.

**<sup>8</sup>Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints; but let them not turn back to folly.**

<sup>9</sup>Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.

**<sup>10</sup>Steadfast love and faithfulness meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other.**

<sup>11</sup>Faithfulness springs up from the ground, and righteousness looks down from the sky.

**<sup>12</sup>Yes, the Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.**

<sup>13</sup>Righteousness will go before him and make his footsteps a way.

### **Second Reading: Colossians 1:3-14**

<sup>3</sup> We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, <sup>4</sup> since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, <sup>5</sup> because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, <sup>6</sup> which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is *bearing fruit and increasing*—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, <sup>7</sup> just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf <sup>8</sup> and has made known to us your love in the Spirit. <sup>9</sup> And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, <sup>10</sup> *so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;* <sup>11</sup> being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; <sup>12</sup> giving thanks<sup>[d]</sup> to the Father, who has qualified you<sup>[e]</sup> to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. <sup>13</sup> He has

delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,<sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

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

*The congregation is invited to stand.*

\* **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION “Return to the Lord”**

**LBW p. 63**

Gospel: Luke 13:1-9

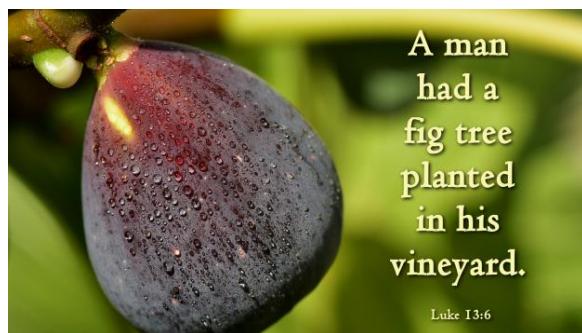
P: The holy gospel according to St. Luke. C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>There were some present at that very time who told {Jesus} about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. <sup>2</sup>And he answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? <sup>3</sup>No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. <sup>4</sup>Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? <sup>5</sup>No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.” <sup>6</sup>And he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. <sup>7</sup>And he said to the vinedresser, ‘Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?’ <sup>8</sup>And he answered him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. <sup>9</sup>Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

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

*The congregation may be seated.*

### **CHILDREN’S MESSAGE**



### **SERMON**

“Suffering – Growing in the Garden of God’s Grace: Repentance, Renewal, Rejoicing, and Reproducing”

*Pastor Doug*

**\*HYMN OF THE DAY** “For the Fruit of All Creation”

WOV 760

**\*THE APOSTLES' CREED**

LBW p. 65

**\*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

LBW p. 65

*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 LBW p. 66

\* **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

P: God of blessing and provision, we bring nothing into this world and we can take nothing out of it. Accept the gifts you have first given us, which we bring to your table, and with them the offering of our lives. Nourish us now with the life and love of Christ our Lord as we receive His presence in the feast of Holy Communion; in the name of Jesus the Bread of Life. C: Amen.

\* **DIALOGUE AND PREFACE** LBW p. 68

\* **HOLY, HOLY, HOLY** LBW p. 69

\* **WORDS OF INSTITUTION** LBW p. 70

\* **LORD'S PRAYER** LBW p. 71

\* **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 LBW p. 72

**COMMUNION HYMN** “Blessed Assurance” WOV 699

*The congregation is invited to stand.*

## \* **COMMUNION BLESSING AND PRAYER**

P: Tender and merciful God, at your feast, you fed us who brought nothing, turning our emptiness to joy. *Filled with your abundant grace, send us now to be ministers of reconciliation, mending broken hearts, working for justice, and striving for peace among all people, in the name of Jesus Christ.* C: Amen.

## \* **BLESSING**

## \* **SENDING HYMN** “Day by Day”

WOV 746

## \* **DISMISSAL**

P: Jesus is the True Vine and we are the branches! Connected to Him we receive new life and what we need to bear fruit. Let us go in peace and joy to love and serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

## **POSTLUDE**

**CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY**, love and prayers are extended by the People of God at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church to the family and loved ones of Herb Travis in their hour of bereavement. May God comfort all who mourn.

### **Grace Prayer List**

**In the Grace Church Family:** The family of Herb & Libby Travis.

Jeffry Bivens, Rick & Cindy Bivens, Glenda Childers, Pat Dietz, Allen and Kay Hatchett, Larry Heavner, Lorene Heavner, Larry & Brenda Jarrett, Martha Johnson, Faye Lane, Cole Leatherman, Phil & Malinda Leatherman, Tim Leatherman, Betty Matheson, Joe Momier, Jane Moss, Christine Norman, Tricia and Dan Panek, Michael, Debi & Stephen Pisko, Helen Smith, Ethan Starnes, Sandi Tallant, Shirley Warlick, Scott & Carolyn Whisnant, Nancy Willis, and Jack Wilfong.

**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, Randy Neill (Shelia Drum's brother), Evelyn Childers, Family of Adam Fortner, Billy Fortner, Family of Celia Hollar, Mel Raybourne, Kathy Rihani, Jeffry Smith, Ed Tanzman, Kelly Wesson, 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.

### **ADDRESS FOR LIBBY TRAVIS:**

If you would like to send condolences to Libby Travis, she is staying with her daughter at 1926 45<sup>th</sup> Ave. Place NE Hickory, NC 28601.

## **VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**

The VBS team will meet at Grace on Monday, March 31 at 6:30 pm in the downstairs classroom.

## **COMING UP AT GRACE THIS WEEK**

### **Today: Third Sunday in Lent**

9:15am – Sunday School 10:30am - Worship Celebration

### **Monday:**

6:00pm – Leadership Ministry Board Meeting

### **Wednesday:**

6:30pm – Lenten Vespers Service at Grace Union Church

## **ORDERING EASTER LILIES**

Orders for Easter lilies will continue to be accepted through Sunday, March 30. When placing your order, please use the special envelope found in your bulletin. Dedications in memory or in honor of someone can be designated on the purple order form to be placed inside the envelope with your cash or check.

## **Special Dates and Events Coming Soon**

### **Wednesday Vespers Service During Lent: March 12, 19, 26, April 2 & 9**

We will have a short worship service with first person monologues presented by Pastor Doug. The theme will be “Friend of Sinners – Dinner with Jesus!”

### **Sun, April 13, Palm/Passion Sunday Procession of Palms /Reading of Luke’s Passion**

### **Thurs., April 17, 6:30pm Maundy Thursday Service**

### **Fri., April 18, 6:30pm Good Friday Service**

### **Sunday, April 20 Resurrection of our Lord! Sunrise Service at 6:45am followed by Easter Breakfast. Sunday School at 9:15am, and Easter Service at 10:30am.**

*Ministers of Grace – All the People of Grace*

*Pastor – Reverend Doug Hefner*

*Board President – Tim Eckard*

*Organist – Sandi Tallant*

*Lector – Todd Childers*

*Altar Preparation & Communion Assistants – Rick & Cindy Bivens*

*Ushers – Jason Yoder & Jeff Scronce*

*Youth Leader – Stormy Shull*

*Offering Counters – Todd Childers & Gary Leatherman*

*Administrative Assistant – Todd Childers*