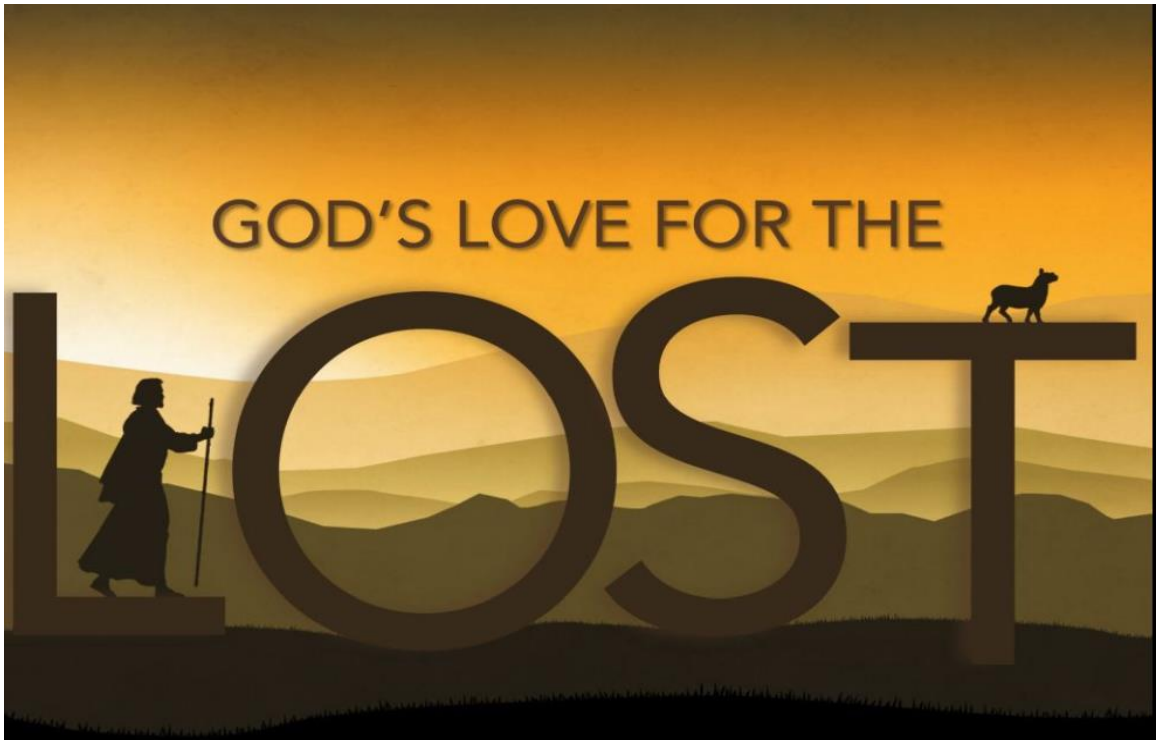


Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 30, 2025 10:30 AM



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church



NORTH AMERICAN
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

4536 Hickory Lincolnton Highway, Newton, North Carolina 28658

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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 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: In the presence of God, who sees our hearts and our minds, who forgives all our sins, whose mercy endures forever, let us confess our sin.

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

P: Eternal God, merciful and holy,

C: with repentant hearts we come to you for healing and forgiveness. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed. Our sins hurt others and diminish us. Look upon us, your children, and show us your mercy. Bind up our wounds, forgive us all our sins, and cleanse us from proud thoughts and empty desires. Create in us a new heart and restore the joy of our salvation 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 righteous of Jesus Christ our Lord, so that we can enjoy the joy of our salvation. 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 “We Have Come to Join in Worship”**

TCH 207

*** 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: Reconciling God, in you is mercy, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Whether we wander far from you or remain faithful, let us always rejoice in the never-ending and limitless outpouring of your compassion and forgiveness for repentant sinners, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

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

FIRST READING: Isaiah 12: 1-6

¹You will say in that day: “I will give thanks to you, O Lord, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, that you might comfort me. ²“Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.” ³With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. ⁴And you will say in that day: “Give thanks to the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the peoples, proclaim that his name is exalted. ⁵“Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth. ⁶Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.”

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

PSALM 32

¹Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

²**Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.**

³For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.

⁴For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.

⁵I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,” and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.

⁶Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found;

surely in the rush of great waters, they shall not reach him.

⁷You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

⁸I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you.

⁹Be not like a horse or a mule, without understanding, which must be curbed with bit and bridle, or it will not stay near you.

¹⁰Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord.

¹¹Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5: 16-21

¹⁶From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. ¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. ¹⁸All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

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 15: 1-3, 11-32

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

¹The tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear {Jesus}. ²And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.” ³So he told them this parable:

¹¹... “There was a man who had two sons. ¹²And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them. ¹³Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. ¹⁴And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷“But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! ¹⁸I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. ¹⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.”’ ²⁰And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. ²¹And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ ²²But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. ²³And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. ²⁴For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate. ²⁵Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. ²⁷And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.’ ²⁸But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, ²⁹but he answered his father, ‘Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’ ³¹And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³²It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’”

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

The congregation may be seated.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

SERMON



“Jesus Came to Seek and Save the Lost: In Christ We Are His Ambassadors Sent with the Ministry of Reconciliation”

Pastor Doug

***HYMN OF THE DAY** “I Am Thine O Lord”

TCH 552

***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.**

Worshippers 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: Let us pray. God of glory, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with Words of grace and life. Filled with Your blessings, receive these gifts and the offering of our lives. As Jesus was lifted up from the earth, draw us to your heart in the midst of this world, that all creation may be brought from bondage to freedom, from darkness to light, and from death to life; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

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

“O Love That Will Not Let Me Go”

TCH 606

The congregation is invited to stand.

* **COMMUNION BLESSING AND PRAYER**

P: Merciful God, we give thanks for the meal of grace that has nourished our faith. As we continue our Lenten journey through these forty days, we ask that You would renew us in the gift of baptism, that we may provide for those who are poor, pray for those in need, fast from self-indulgence, and above all that we may find our treasure in the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

* **BLESSING**

* **SENDING HYMN** **“Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness”** **TCH 293**

* **DISMISSAL**

P: Reconciled to God in Christ, we are ambassadors through whom God is making His appeal of grace and mercy so that the lost may be found, and the dead may find new life. Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Grace Prayer List

In the Grace Church Family:

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, Libby Travis, 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, Hammad Khan, Mel Raybourne, Kathy Rihani, Jeffry Smith, 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 45th Ave. Place NE Hickory, NC 28601

COMING UP AT GRACE THIS WEEK

Today: Sunday in Lent

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

Monday:

6:30pm – VBS meeting in the downstairs classroom

Wednesday:

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

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

4:00 to 6:00 pm – Resurrection Celebration w/ Egg Hunt, Games, & Dinner

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

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

Sunday, April 20 Resurrection of our Lord! Sunrise Service at 7:00 am 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