

Eleventh Sunday After Pentecost

August 24, 2025 10:30 AM



“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” Proverbs 9:10

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: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just

will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. *(1John1:9)*

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: Most merciful God,

C: we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves.

We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God 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** “Earth and All Stars”

LBW 558

* **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: God of light and life, through your Holy Spirit, illumine our lives with your grace so that we may be ready for the coming of your Son. Help us to be ready for his return, that our lamps would be lit and our hearts would be open to Jesus’ second coming. Grant that we may bear the light of your love to the world in need, that all may know of your justice and mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **C: Amen.**

The congregation may be seated.

FIRST READING: Proverbs 2: 1-15, 3: 5-6

My child, if you accept my words and treasure up my commandments within you, ² making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding, ³ if you indeed cry out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, ⁴ if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures—⁵ then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. ⁶ For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding; ⁷ he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk blamelessly, ⁸ guarding the paths of justice and preserving the way of his faithful ones. ⁹ Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path, ¹⁰ for wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul; ¹¹ prudence will watch over you, and understanding will guard you. ¹² It will save you from the way of evil, from those who speak perversely, ¹³ who forsake the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness, ¹⁴ who rejoice in doing evil and delight in the perverseness of evil, ¹⁵ those whose paths are crooked and who are devious in their ways. ⁵ Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

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

PSALM 111

Praise the Lord! I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation.

² Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them.

³ Full of splendor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever.

⁴ He has caused his wondrous works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and merciful.

⁵ He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever.

⁶ He has shown his people the power of his works, in giving them the inheritance of the nations.

⁷ The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy;

⁸ they are established forever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.

⁹ He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever.

Holy and awesome is his name!

¹⁰ The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!

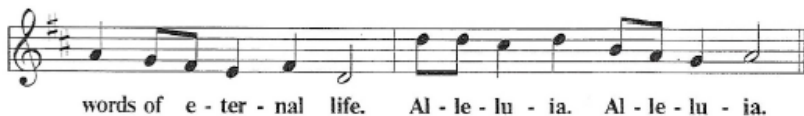
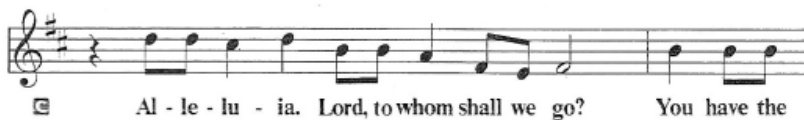
SECOND READING: James 3: 13-18

¹³ Who is wise and knowledgeable among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be arrogant and lie about the truth. ¹⁵ This is not wisdom that comes down from above but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. ¹⁶ For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. ¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. ¹⁸ And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

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”**



***GOSPEL: Matthew 25: 1-13**

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

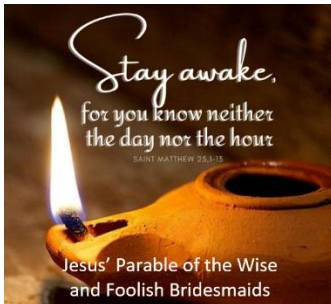
¹{Jesus said to the disciples,} “Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. ³For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, ⁴but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. ⁵As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. ⁶But at midnight there was a cry, ‘Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ ⁷Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. ⁸And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ ⁹But the wise answered, saying, ‘Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.’ ¹⁰And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. ¹¹Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ ¹²But he answered, ‘Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ ¹³Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”

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

The congregation may be seated.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

Back to School Blessing and Prayer for Students, Teachers, Staff, and Parents.



SERMON

“Back to School Message: Seek God’s Wisdom, Be Watchful and Ready, and Let Your Light Shine!”

Pastor Doug

***HYMN OF THE DAY** “Rejoice, Rejoice Believers”

LBW 25

***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.**

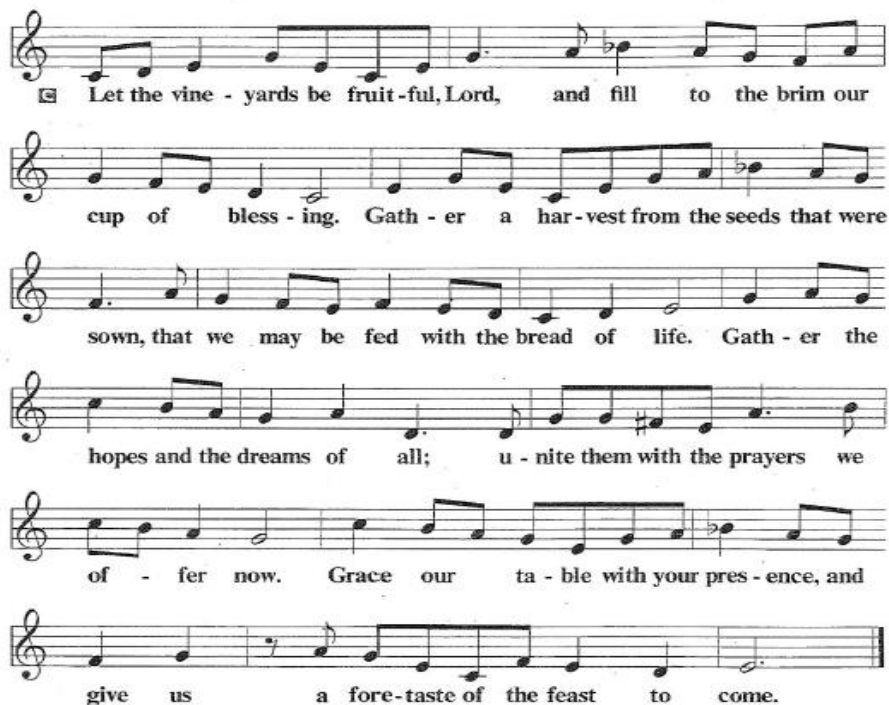
Worshipers may greet one another with "the Peace of Christ."

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



The musical score is written on six staves in treble clef. The lyrics are: 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, 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, to be the light of Christ shining brightly in the world as you call us to agents of your grace and 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.

*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

The musical score is written on four staves in a single system. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a common time signature (C). The melody is composed of eighth and quarter notes. The lyrics are: "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." The lyrics are aligned with the notes on the staves.

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



The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like. The lyrics are: "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 score includes a repeat sign at the end of the fourth staff.

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: Wellspring of joy, through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts. As you have satisfied our hunger for love and mercy, satisfy the hunger still around us and send us as joyful witnesses of light, that your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **C: 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 "Shine, Jesus, Shine "**

WOV 651

***DISMISSAL**

P: Dismissal: You are the light of the world in Christ. Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify our Father in heaven. Go in peace and joy to serve the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God!**



In the Grace Church Family:

Jeffrey Bivens, Rick & Cindy Bivens, Glenda Childers, Pat Dietz, Allen and Kay Hatchett, Larry Heavner, Lorene Heavner, Larry & Brenda Jarrett, Martha Johnson, Faye Lane, Phil & Malinda Leatherman, Cole 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 Jack Wilfong.

Nursing Home: Juanita Haas (Trinity Village), Ted Whisnant (Trinity Village), Dan Panek (Trinity Ridge)

Friends and Relatives in our Prayers: Pray for Peace in Israel and the World, New Covenant Lutheran Mission Church, Ashlee Bumgardner, Clinton Childers, Evelyn Childers, Randy & Rita Neill, Anita Sabino, Karlee Speagle, Scott Speagle, Zach Speagle, Teachers, Staff & Students for the Upcoming Year, 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: Eleventh Sunday After Pentecost

9:30am – Sunday School

10:30am - Worship Celebration

Monday

6:00pm – Leadership Ministry Board meeting

HAPPY AUGUST BIRTHDAY TO:

August 1 – James Hall, Gary Leatherman

August 3 – Sandra Powell

August 7 – Martha Johnson

August 12 – Jane Moss

August 23 – Lynette Momier, Betty Wilfong

August 30 – Pat Dietz

PRAY & GO PRAYER JOURNEY



I hope everyone is still following along with the Pray and Go Prayer Journey. The goal is to be on Day 22 today but if you are not, that's ok. I personally got a little behind with the death of my father and preparing for his funeral. The main thing is to keep moving through each chapter as you can and as best as

you can meet the challenge for that day. We have been asked to pray for "Your One" and to write a note of encouragement to them. We have been asked to pray for our church, pastor, and neighborhood. We have been asked to invite one person and then to invite 3 more. And on Day 22, today, we are asked to invite someone that we don't know. I want you all to know that I am praying for you as you read these chapters and meet the challenges to Pray and Go! This may be the first time for some of you to invite someone to church. How does it feel? I pray that you will be encouraged by our Lord Jesus and his love as you pray for others and invite them to worship with us so that they can hear the good news of the Gospel. Let's pray, like St. Paul, that we will be "unashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for it is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes." Romans 1:16-17 Please let me know if you have questions or would like to talk.

In Jesus' name, Pastor Doug

UPCOMING SUNDAY EVENTS

August 31 - Last of Sermon Series on the Parables - Special Labor Day (9/1) Sermon focusing on Parables of the Talents and Laborers in the Vineyard.

September 7 - We will celebrate Grandparents Day! We will give thanks to God not only for Grandparents, but all members of our family. We will also celebrate that we, the Church, are the family of God.

September 14 - Team Sunday - Everyone is invited to wear your favorite team jersey (high school, college, or pro team) as we celebrate that we, as the Church, the body of Christ, are part of God's team. We will also talk about our ministry teams and invite everyone to be a part of the Dream Team.

September 21 - Homecoming Sunday Worship at 10:30am followed by Covered Dish Dinner in the Fellowship Hall. Please invite friends, extended family, and neighbors! We have invitations for you to send.

RIGHTNOW MEDIA Don't forget to activate your free membership to RightNow Media, the world's largest streaming library of video Bible study resources. You should have received an email invitation for FREE access – if you haven't received it yet, be sure to check your spam or promotions folder. To get started, simply click the link in the email, create your free account, and start browsing more than 20,000 inspiring videos. We pray that RightNow Media will be a blessing to you and your family! Visit <https://app.rightnowmedia.org/join/glcnc> OR text the code GLCNC to 49775. Please share this information with family, friends, neighbors, or anybody that you want to share the Gospel with and invite to Grace. This is our gift to all we meet.

HOMECOMING CELEBRATION ON SUNDAY SEPT. 21!
Listen God is Calling! Theme for Homecoming Sunday, Sept. 21
Celebrating God's Love and Faithfulness for 228 Years!

“Listen God is Calling” is a hymn (WOV712) that was written at the Lutheran Theological College in Tanzania in 1968 and has been translated into English for American congregations to sing in worship. The words are beautiful and powerful as they remind us of God’s call to experience God’s gifts of forgiveness, comfort, and joy and to also share the good news of God’s love with others. *I chose this hymn for our worship together when I was installed as your pastor on December 7, 2024.* Here are the words:

Refrain: (Listen), Listen God is calling, through the Word inviting, offering forgiveness, comfort and joy.

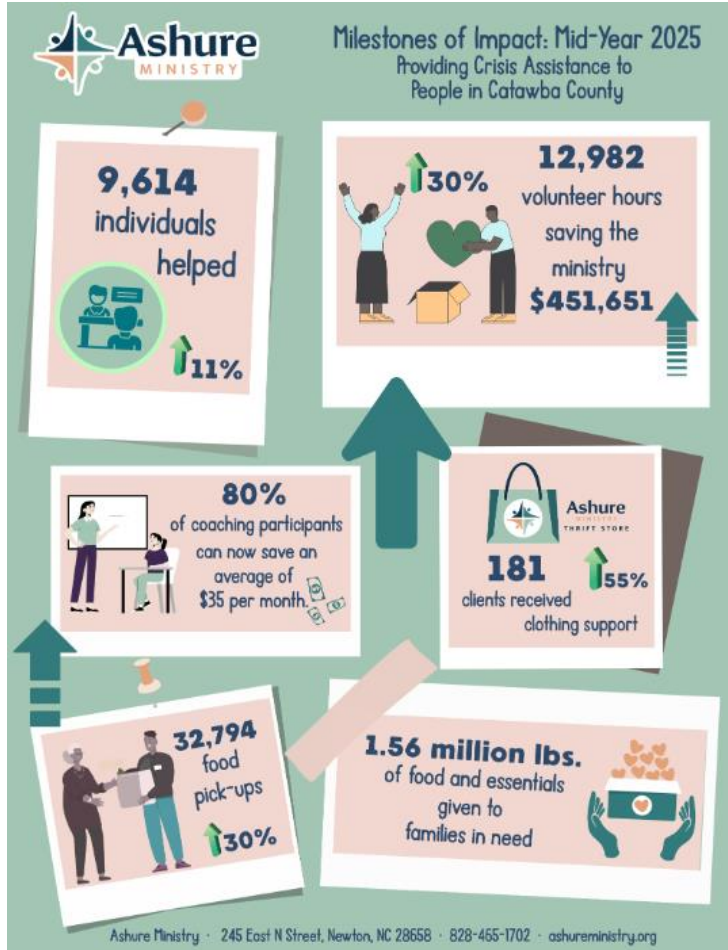
- 1 (Jesus gave his mandate:) share the good news (that he came to save us) and set us free. *Refrain*
- 2 (Let none be forgotten) throughout the world. (In the triune name of God) go and baptize. *Refrain*
- 3 (Help us to be faithful,) standing steadfast, (walking in your precepts,) led by your Word. *Refrain*

Verse 1 reminds us that this Good News comes to us in Jesus, God’s Son, who came to save us and set us free through his life, ministry, death and resurrection. Verse 2 reminds us of our calling, that none would be forgotten as we minister in Jesus’ name and go and baptize in Jesus’ name. Verse 3 is a prayer for the Church “the called out ones”: Help us to be faithful, standing steadfast, walking in Your Precepts, let by your Word. The song reminds us of the very heart of who and whose we are and what our calling and mission is as the people of God. That is the reason I chose this song to begin our journey together as pastor and congregation.

“Listen God is Calling” will be our theme as we celebrate 228 years of God’s blessing and calling as God’s people on our Homecoming, September 21, 2025. Worship will be at 10:30am and a covered dish meal will follow in the fellowship hall and shelter. Please invite your family, neighbors, former members, friends, and coworkers! We are preparing in the office a card that can be mailed or handed out.

ASHURE MINISTRY UPDATE

You're making a difference! Grace has donated 934 pounds of food year to date.



Ministers of Grace – All the People of Grace
Pastor – Reverend Doug Hefner Board President – Tim Eckard
Lector – Stormy Shull Youth Leader – Stormy Shull
Altar Preparation – Cindy Bivens
Communion Assistants – Cindy Bivens & Shelly Scronce
Ushers – David Wilfong & Jack Parris
Offering Counters – Todd Childers & Tim Eckard