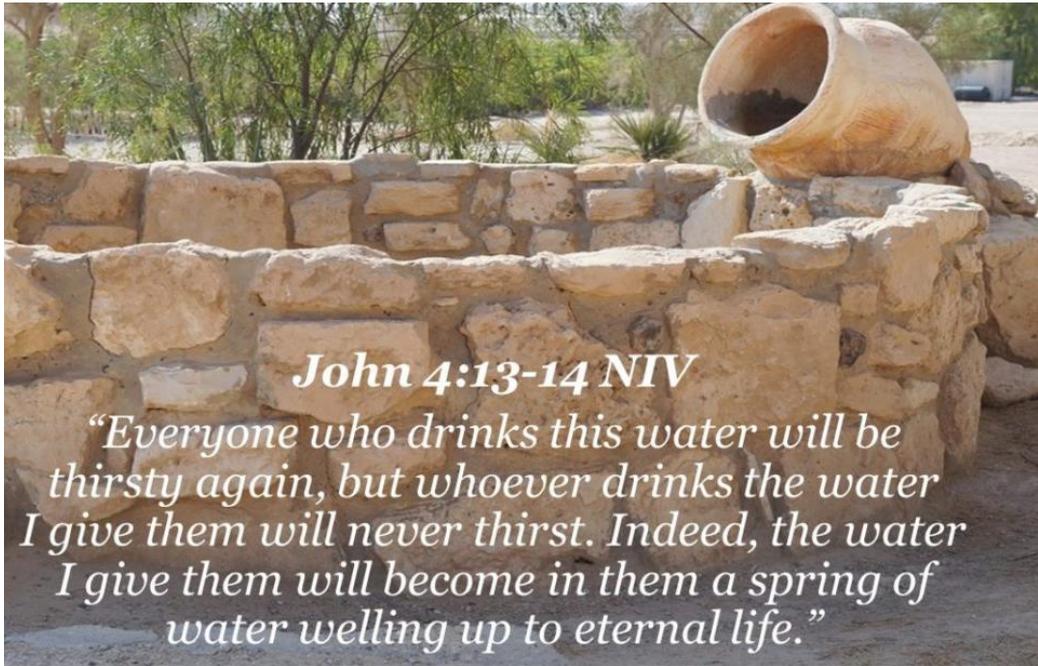


Third Sunday in Lent

March 8, 2026 10:30 AM



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church



4536 Hickory Lincolnton Highway, Newton, North Carolina 28658

Church Office: (704) 462-1035 email: gracenalcnorton@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 heaven and earth, as we journey with our Lord to the cross during this Lenten Season, empower us with your Spirit to confess our sin, embrace your forgiveness, and seek to walk in the way of the cross you have set before us in 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: God of mercy and grace,

C: Like the prodigal son, we have wandered far from home; again and again we lose our way. We forget your call to love our neighbor and neglect to be ambassadors of your gift of reconciliation. Do not remember the deeds of our past, but turn our faces and hearts toward a new future, where your forgiveness is sure, your welcome is clear, and your love overflows with living water to bless the world through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

P: Like manna and water in the desert, God feeds us and quenches our thirst with surprising mercy. Like the woman at the well, God meets us in our pain and brokenness to forgive and restore us. God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit given to us. 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**

“Come to Me All Pilgrims”

Tune: Beach Spring

1 "Come to me, all pilgrims thirsty; drink the water I will give.

If you knew what gift I offer, you would come to me and live."

Refrain Jesus, ever flowing fountain, give us water from your well.

In the gracious gift you offer there is joy no tongue can tell.

2. "Come to me, all trav-‘lers weary, come that I may give you rest.

Dirnk the cup of life I offer, at this table be my guest." *Refrain*

3 "Come to me, believers burdened; find refreshment in this place.

Come, receive the gift I offer, turn to me and seek my face." *Refrain*

4. Come to me, repentant sinners, leave behind your guilt and shame.

Come and know divine compassion, turn to me, call your name. *Refrain*

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:

Merciful and loving God, you are the fountain of living water. Stir within us a renewed sense of the gift of your mercy, given through your grace in the waters of baptism. Give us this living water always; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

The congregation may be seated.

FIRST READING: Exodus 17: 1-7

¹All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of Sin by stages, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ²Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?" ³But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against

Moses and said, “Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?” ⁴So Moses cried to the LORD, “What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me.” ⁵And the LORD said to Moses, “Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. ⁶Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink.” And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. ⁷And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the LORD by saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

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

SECOND READING: Romans 5: 1-8

¹Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ²Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. ⁶For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷For one will scarcely die for a righteous person — though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die — ⁸but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

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

The congregation is invited to stand.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

“Return to the Lord Your God”

LBW p. 63

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and
mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in
stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

***GOSPEL: John 4: 5-42 Dramatic Reading**

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

Narrator: ⁵So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon. ⁷A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her,

Jesus: "Give me a drink."

Narrator: ⁸(His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) ⁹The Samaritan woman said to him,

Woman: "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?"

Narrator (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) ¹⁰Jesus answered her,

Jesus: "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

Narrator ¹¹The woman said to him,

Woman: "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? ¹²Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?"

Narrator ¹³Jesus said to her, **Jesus:** "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life."

Narrator ¹⁵The woman said to him,

Woman: "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

Narrator ¹⁶Jesus said to her, **Jesus:** "Go, call your husband, and come back."

Narrator ¹⁷The woman answered him, **Woman:** "I have no husband."

Narrator Jesus said to her, **Jesus:** "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; ¹⁸for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!"

Narrator ¹⁹The woman said to him, **Woman:** "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. ²⁰Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem."

Narrator ²¹Jesus said to her, **Jesus:** "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²²You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. ²⁴God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

Narrator ²⁵The woman said to him, **Woman:** "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us."

Narrator ²⁶Jesus said to her, **Jesus**: "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

Narrator ²⁷Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you speaking with her?"

²⁸Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people,

Woman: ²⁹Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?

Narrator ³⁰They left the city and were on their way to him. ³¹Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something." ³²But he said to them,

Jesus: "I have food to eat that you do not know about."

Narrator ³³So the disciples said to one another, "Surely no one has brought him something to eat?" ³⁴Jesus said to them, **Jesus**: "My food is to do the will of him who

sent me and to complete his work. ³⁵Do you not say, 'Four months more, then comes the harvest'? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting.

³⁶The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. ³⁷For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' ³⁸I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

Narrator ³⁹Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony,

Woman: "He told me everything I have ever done."

Narrator ⁴⁰So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. ⁴¹And many more believed because of his word. ⁴²They said to the woman,

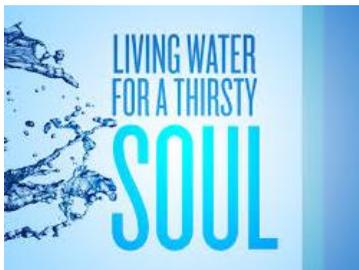
Village/Congregation: "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world."

P: The Gospel of the Lord. C: Praise to you, O Christ!

The congregation may be seated.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON



"Living Water for Our Thirsty and Dry Spirits"

Pastor Doug Hefner

***HYMN OF THE DAY:**

"Beneath the Cross of Jesus"

LBW 107

***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.**
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

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: God of blessing and provision, 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 wellspring of Living Water. Amen

* **THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

LBW PG. 68

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 our thanks and praise.

* **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: Merciful God, we give you thanks for nourishing our faith with Jesus, the Living Water. 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 help 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 Lord and Savior. **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**

“Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer”

LBW 343

***DISMISSAL**

P: Filled and overflowing with the Living Water, let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

C: Thanks be to God.



In the Grace Church Family:

Jeffry Bivens, Rick & Cindy Bivens, Glenda Childers, Pat Dietz, Allen and Kay Hatchett, Larry Heavner, Lorene Heavner, Chris Jarrett, 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, Alice Parris, Helen Smith (at Frye Hospital), Ethan Starnes, Sandi Tallant, Libby Travis, Shirley Warlick, Ken & Tirzah Welch, Scott & Carolyn Whisnant, and Nancy Willis.

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, family of Carl Beam, Ashlee Bumgardner, Clinton Childers, Evelyn Childers, Holly Groce, Anne Poovey, Randy & Rita Neill, 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.

HAPPY MARCH BIRTHDAY TO:

Jacob Jarrett – March 4 Christine Norman – March 5
Danny Robertson – March 12 Malinda Leatherman – March 22
Belinda Wilfong – March 24

COMING UP AT GRACE THIS WEEK

Today: Third Sunday in Lent

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

Monday: 5:30pm – Vacation Bible School meeting at Zion Lutheran Church

Wednesday: 6:30pm – Lenten Vespers Service w/ Bible Study in Fellowship Hall

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sun, March 15, Ministry Teams Breakfast Workshop at 9:15am

Wed, March 18, Grace Seniors Luncheon at 12:00 noon in Fellowship Hall

Sun, March 29, Palm Sunday, Sunday of the Passion

Thur, April 2, Maundy Thursday and **Fri, April 3,** Good Friday

Sun, April 5, Easter with Sunrise Service, Breakfast, Main Service at 10:30am

GIVING AND ATTENDANCE FOR LAST SUNDAY

Date	Offering		Attendance	
	Total Receipts	General Fund	Worship	Sunday School
3/1/2026	\$ 4,019	\$ 3,196.00	44	11

EASTER LILIES – LAST SUNDAY TO PLACE ORDERS



Orders for Easter lilies will be taken today only. Order forms and special envelopes can be found in the Narthex. Please use the special envelope for your order and any other offering you may make on the Sunday that you place your order. The cost is \$13.00 per lily. The flowers may be taken after the 10:30 am Worship service on Easter Sunday.

MINISTRY TEAMS BREAKFAST WORKSHOP

The Ministry Teams will meet on Sunday morning, March 8 at 9:15 am in the Fellowship Hall for a working breakfast. Coffee, juice, and Danishes / doughnuts will be provided. Teams should be prepared to discuss their duties and responsibilities and create a plan of action to include creating a calendar of activities or events that they are responsible for.

Worship / Fellowship	Discipleship	Stewardship / Finance	Stewardship / Property
Tim Eckard (B)	Sheila Drum(B)	Rick Bivens (B)	Allen Biggerstaff (B)
Kim Parker (B)	Kim Parker (B)	Alan Shull (B)	Jeff Scronce (B)
Sherry Biggerstaff	Sherry Biggerstaff	Kim Parker (B)	Gary Leatherman (B)
Frankie Crouse	Nicky Jarrett	Todd Childers	Jason Yoder (B)
Gabby Hefner	Belinda Wilfong	Jake Jarrett	Gene Crouse
Lula Ingle	Betty Wilfong	James Robertson	Chris Jarrett
Tawanna Jarrett	Tina Hefner	Charlene Beaver	David Wilfong
Jack Parris	Steven Beaver		Don Jarrett
Shelly Scronce			Jack Wilfong
Susan Setzer			Todd Setzer
Stormy Shull			

**Some members are assigned to multiple teams. If you are assigned to more than one, please let us know if you would like to be removed from a particular team.

SAVE THE DATES

Grace partners with 5 other local churches for a community *Vacation Bible School*. The host church this year is Zion Lutheran Church and the date is **Sunday, May 31 – Thursday, June 4**. They will announce the theme soon and we will need adult volunteers to help. The VBS is not just for children/youth; there is an adult class offered as well. Grace will be hosting the *Carolina's Mission District Solid Rock Day Camp* again this year. The dates are **Monday, June 15 – Friday, June 19**. The camp is for children/youth 4K- 5th grade. We will have college age counselors and a seminarian to lead the camp. The hours are 9 am - 4 pm Monday-Thursday, 9 am- 12 noon on Friday The week will include Bible study, singing, games, crafts, skits, and lots of fun! Cost is only \$100 for a full week of growing in the faith and lots of fun! Grace will be providing help with the cost for any members that want to attend.

Introducing Jesus: Son of God, Messiah, Lord, and Savior of the World!

During Sunday School (9:15AM), Midweek Lent Service (6:30PM), and Holy Week, Pastor Doug will present video clips focusing on Jesus from the amazing, powerful,

inspirational series called *The Chosen*. Each gathering will have prayers, some singing/praising, Scripture reading, and a short dramatic video clip highlighting our Scripture for that gathering. We will take some time to reflect together on the Scripture and video clip. This is for all ages! Some have termed a gathering like this as *Intergenerational*. In other words, bring your whole family! (especially children and youth!) There will be 12 studies! We will gather at 9:15am on Sunday mornings 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/22, and 3/29. At 6:30pm on Wednesdays 2/25, 3/4, 3/11, 3/18, 3/25. And on Maundy Thursday, 4/2 at 6:30pm and Good Friday, 6:30pm. Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings will be held in the Fellowship Hall. Light refreshments will be provided. Maundy Thursday and Good Friday will be held in the Sanctuary as part of our worship service on these days. Please note that on 3/15 we will gather at 9:15am for Ministry Team Sunday. All four ministry teams will meet that morning. Coffee and a light breakfast will be provided.

RESURRECTION CELEBRATION AND EASTER EGG HUNT

Last year we offered a gathering for families with children and youth to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord. We had games, prizes, food and an Easter egg hunt. This seems like a good way to connect with our community. Are there volunteers who would like to help Pastor Doug put this together? And what would be a good date to offer this event?

Ministers of Grace – All the People of Grace
Pastor – Reverend Doug Hefner Board President – Tim Eckard
Lector – Tim Eckard Youth Leader – Stormy Shull
Altar Preparation – Belinda Wilfong & Frankie Crouse
Communion Assistants – Kim Parker & Shelly Scronce
Ushers – David Wilfong and Jeff Scronce
Offering Counters – Todd Childers & Jason Yoder