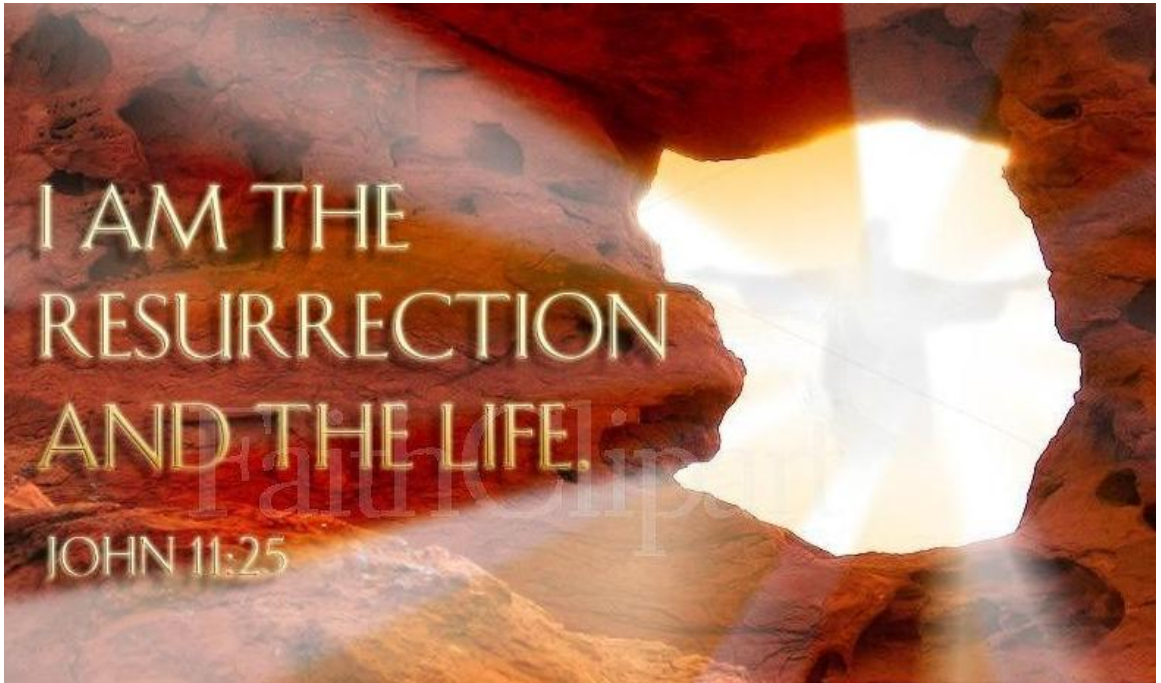


Fifth Sunday in Lent

March 22, 2026 10:30 AM



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church



4536 Hickory Lincolnton Highway, Newton, North Carolina 28658

Church Office: (704) 462-1035 email: gracenalcnwton@aol.com

www.gracelutheran-newton.org

Rev. Doug Hefner 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.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

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: 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

***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.

KYRIE:

Ⓐ In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Ⓑ Lord, have mer - cy.

Ⓐ For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Ⓑ Lord, have mer - cy.

Ⓐ For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,

and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

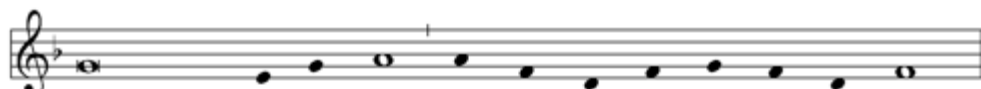
Ⓑ Lord, have mer - cy.

Ⓐ For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,

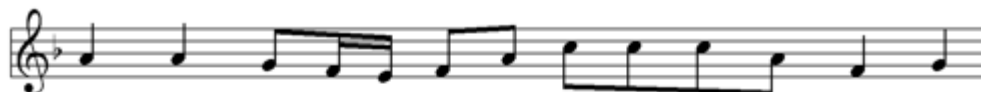
let us pray to the Lord. Ⓑ Lord, have mer - cy.

Ⓐ Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. Ⓑ A - men

***HYMN OF PRAISE:**



♩ Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his peo - ple on earth.



♩ Lord God, heav - en - ly king, al - might - y God and Fa - ther:



We wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God:



You take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.



You are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther; re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - - men

***PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

Almighty God, your Son Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life, came into this world bringing salvation and life to all who believe. May your Spirit breathe life into the dry bones of our lives so that we may follow and serve you in newness of life; 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: Ezekiel 37: 1-14

¹The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones. ²And he led me around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry. ³And he said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" And I answered, "O LORD God, you know." ⁴Then he said to me, "Prophesy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. ⁵Thus says the LORD God to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. ⁶And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the LORD." ⁷So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a sound, and behold, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. ⁸And I looked, and behold, there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them. But there was no breath in them. ⁹Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, Thus says the LORD God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live." ¹⁰So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army. ¹¹Then he said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off.' ¹²Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the LORD God: Behold, I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel. ¹³And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people. ¹⁴And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the LORD."

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

SECOND READING: Romans 8: 1-11

¹There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ²For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. ³For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in

the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. ⁸Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

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

The congregation is invited to stand.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

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 11: 17-45**

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

¹⁷Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. ¹⁸Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, ¹⁹and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. ²⁰So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house. ²¹Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you." ²³Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." ²⁴Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." ²⁵Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life.

Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world." ²⁸When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." ²⁹And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him. ³⁰Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him. ³¹When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. ³²Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." ³³When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. ³⁴And he said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." ³⁵Jesus wept. ³⁶So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" ³⁷But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?" ³⁸Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. ³⁹Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days." ⁴⁰Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" ⁴¹So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴²I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me." ⁴³When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out." ⁴⁴The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go." ⁴⁵Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him,

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

The congregation may be seated.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON

"I Am the Resurrection and the Life"

Pastor Doug Hefner

***HYMN OF THE DAY: "O Love That Will Not Let Me Go"**

LBW 324

***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



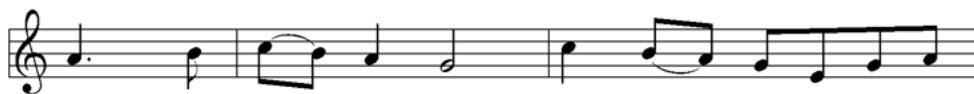
cup of bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the



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: Merciful Father,

C: we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us – our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen


*** THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**



♩ The Lord be with you. ♪ And al - so with you.



♩ Lift up your hearts. ♪ We lift them to the Lord.



♩ Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



♪ It is right to give him thanks and praise.

***HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**



♪ 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**

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.

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen.

***COMMUNION BLESSING AND PRAYER**

P: Pour out upon us the spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of those whom you have fed with one heavenly food; 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. **C: Amen.**

***SENDING HYMN**

“Jesus, Still Lead On”

LBW 341

***DISMISSAL**

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

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: Fifth Sunday in Lent

9:15am – Sunday School – Using clips from *The Chosen* series.

10:30am - Worship Celebration

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Thur, April 2, Maundy Thursday 6:30pm and **Fri, April 3**, Good Friday 6:30pm

Sun, April 5, Easter with Sunrise Service 7:00am, Breakfast 8:00am, Sunday School 9:15am, and Main Service at 10:30am

GIVING AND ATTENDANCE FOR LAST SUNDAY

Date	Total Receipts	General Fund	Worship Att.	Sun. Sch. Att.
3/15/26	\$1,688	\$1,650	38	22

SAVE THE DATES

Grace is part of a community VBS with 5 other churches. This year's VBS is *Illumination Station: Shining a Light On Who Jesus Really Is!* The date is Sunday, 5/31 to Thursday 6/4 from 5:30-8pm. Dinner is served each night followed by Bible stories, music, crafts, and games! Children, youth and adults may register at <https://www.zionhickory.org/vbs-2026>. Volunteers are needed. Next planning meeting is 3/20 5:30 at Zion or see Shelly Scronce for details. 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!



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, Harvey Leatherman, Phil & Malinda Leatherman, Tim Leatherman, Betty Matheson, Jane Moss, Christine Norman, Michael Norman, Tricia and Dan Panek, Mike, Debi & Stephen Pisko, Waylon Parker, Ethan Starnes, Sandi Tallant, Libby Travis, Shirley Warlick, Ken & Tirzah Welch, Scott & Carolyn Whisnant, and Nancy Willis.

Nursing Home: Juanita Haas (Trinity Village), Helen Smith (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, Ashlee Bumgardner, Travis Bumgardner, Clinton Childers, Evelyn Childers, Holly Groce, Joe Momier, Randy & Rita Neill, Anne Poovey, Donald Smith, 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.

***Blessing Box Maintenance & Replenishment
Schedule***

Week 1 – Stewardship Finance Ministry Team

Week 2 – Discipleship Ministry Team

Week 3 – Worship Ministry Team

Week 4 – Stewardship Property Ministry Team

Week 5 - (if applicable) – Discipleship Ministry

Team

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