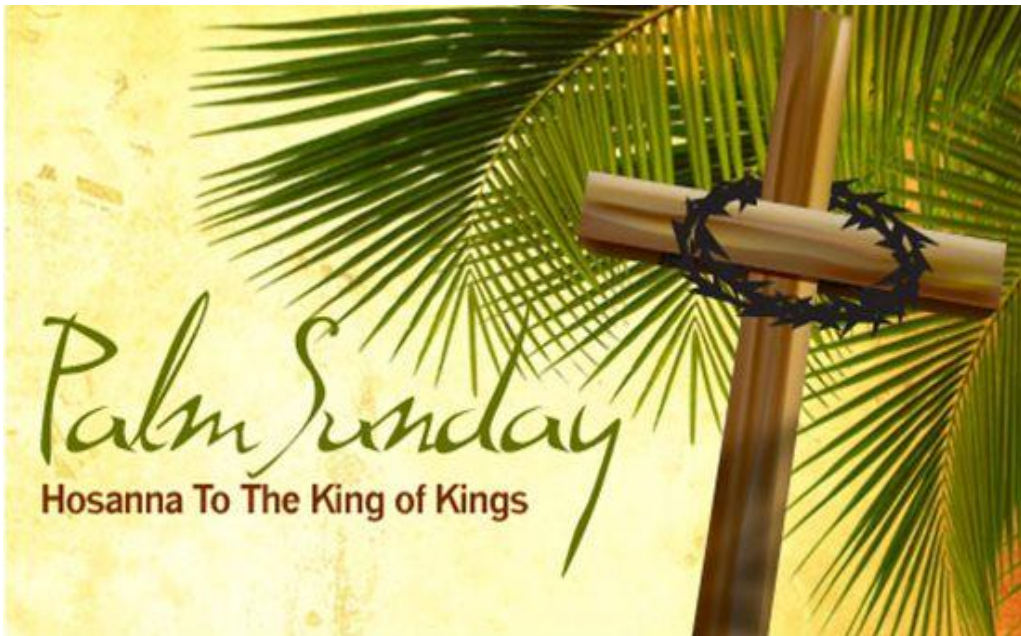


# **Palm Sunday / Passion Sunday** **Sunday, March 29, 2026**



## **Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church**



---

**4536 Hickory Lincolnton Highway, Newton, North Carolina 28658**  
**Church Office: (704) 462-1035 email: [gracenalnewton@aol.com](mailto:gracenalnewton@aol.com)**  
**[www.gracelutheran-newton.org](http://www.gracelutheran-newton.org)**

**Rev. Doug Hefner email: [pastorhefner@aol.com](mailto:pastorhefner@aol.com)**

**Sandi Tallant – Organist    Todd Childers – Administrative Assistant**

**Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 9am to 1pm**

**Tuesday and Thursday 12pm to 4pm**

**PRELUDE**  
**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**GATHERING**

*During the prelude, please gather just outside the front of the church, weather permitting, to begin the procession with Palms.*

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. **C: Hosanna in the highest.**

**PROCESSIONAL GOSPEL: John 12:12-19**

The Gospel According to St. John **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>12</sup>The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup>So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" <sup>14</sup>And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written, <sup>15</sup>"Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!" <sup>16</sup>His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him. <sup>17</sup>The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. <sup>18</sup>The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign. <sup>19</sup>So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**BLESSING OF PALMS**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray.

*A brief silence is kept before the prayer.*

We praise you, O God, for redeeming the world through our Savior Jesus Christ. Today he entered the holy city in triumph and was proclaimed messiah and king by those who spread garments and branches along his way. Bless these branches and those who carry them. Grant us grace to follow our Lord in the way of the cross, so that, joined to his death and resurrection, we enter into life with you; through the same Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## PROCESSION

Let us go forth in peace, **in the name of Christ. Amen.**

**PROCESSIONAL HYMN: “ALL GLORY, LAUD AND HONOR” ..... LBW 108**

*(During this hymn we process to our seats and remain standing for the prayer)*

**Refrain: All glory, laud, and honor to you, redeemer, king,  
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.**

1) You are the king of Israel and David's royal Son,  
now in the Lord's name coming, our King and Blessed One. **Refrain**

2) The company of angels are praising you on high;  
creation and all mortals in chorus make reply. **Refrain**

3) The multitude of pilgrims with palms before you went.  
Our praise and prayer and anthems before you we present. **Refrain**

4) To you, before your passion, they sang their hymns of praise.  
To you, now high exalted, our melody we raise. **Refrain**

5) Their praises you accepted; accept the prayers we bring,  
great author of all goodness, O good and gracious king. **Refrain**

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

**Hosanna in the highest.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY INTRODUCTION

As we now enter into the contemplation of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ and meditate on the salvation of the world through his sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection, let us pray.

Everlasting God, in your endless love for the human race you sent our Lord Jesus Christ to take on our nature and to suffer death on the cross. In your mercy enable us to share in his obedience to your will and in the glorious victory of his resurrection, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C: Amen.**

*The assembly is seated.*

## THE WORD OF GOD

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 53: 4-10**

<sup>4</sup>Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup>But he was wounded for our transgressions,

crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. <sup>6</sup>All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. <sup>7</sup>He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. <sup>8</sup>By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future? For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people. <sup>9</sup>They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. <sup>10</sup>Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him with pain. When you make his life an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days; through him the will of the LORD shall prosper.

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

### **SECOND READING: Philippians 2:5–11**

<sup>5</sup>Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, <sup>7</sup>but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, <sup>8</sup>he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup>Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup>and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father.

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

### **PALM SUNDAY / PASSION SUNDAY REFLECTION:**

*“Jesus Goes to Jerusalem and the Cross for Us - The Greatest Love Story Ever Told” –  
Pastor Doug Hefner*

#### **The Passion of our Lord According to St. Matthew**

(We remain seated as Passion story is read in parts in a dramatic reading using the booklet, “The Passion of Our Lord according to Luke.” The hymns that will be sung through the reading are printed below.)

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. Matthew.

**C: Glory to You, O Lord.**

**Matthew 26: 14-75, 27: 1-66 (See Booklet)**

**\*\*\*After Chapter 26, We will sing “Go to Dark Gethsemane” (verses 1-3) LBW 109**

**\*\*\*After Chapter 27, We will sing “Were You There” (verses 1-3) LBW 92**

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

**\*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 THE PEOPLE OF GOD, THE CHURCH**

*(response for each prayer petition L: Lord in Your mercy C: Hear our prayer”)*

**\* SHARING OF GODS’ PEACE:**

**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.*



## 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

Generous God, you feed us with the harvest of the land and you provide for our every need **C: Receive our gifts of time, talent, and treasure, the passion of our love for you, and transform us into a community of grace at this feast of love that welcomes all, in the name of Jesus Christ, who welcomes us to the feast of Holy Communion. 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**

\* **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

All are invited to receive Holy Communion.

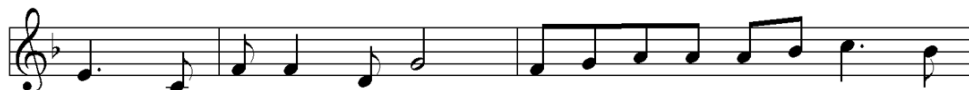
**COMMUNION SONG**      **Lamb of God**



☐ 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.

**BLESSING AND PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION:**

Gracious God, in this meal you have drawn us to your heart and nourished us at your table with food and drink, the body and blood of Christ. Now send us forth to be your people in the world, and to proclaim your love and grace this day and evermore, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **C: Amen.**

**PASTORAL BLESSING** The Lord bless you and keep you.... **C: Amen**

**SENDING HYMN: "Old Rugged Cross"**

**The Old Rugged Cross** Words and Music: George Bernard (1873-1958)

1. On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross, The emblem of suffering and shame;  
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best For a world of lost sinners was slain.

***Chorus:** So I'll cherish the old rugged cross, Till my trophies at last I lay down;  
I will cling to the old rugged cross, And exchange it someday for a crown.*

2. O that old rugged cross, so despised by the world, Has a wondrous attraction for me;  
For the dear lamb of God left His glory above, To bear it on dark Calvary. **Chorus**

3. In the old rugged cross, stained with blood so divine, A wondrous beauty I see;  
For 'twas on that old cross Jesus suffered and died, To pardon and sanctify me. **Chorus**

4. To the old rugged cross I will ever be true, Its shame and reproach gladly bear;  
Then He'll call me someday to His home far away, Where His glory forever I'll share.  
**Chorus**

### **DISMISSAL**

Having the same mind as Christ, let us humble ourselves and live passionately for Christ who gave his life for us. Let us go in peace and serve the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### **POSTLUDE**

### **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: Palm Sunday / Passion Sunday**

9:15am – Sunday School

10:30am - Worship Celebration

**Wednesday:** *No Wednesday Service this week – will resume on April 15th*

**Thursday:** 6:30pm – Maundy Thursday Service

**Friday:** 6:30pm – Good Friday Tenebrae Service

## EASTER SUNDAY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**Sunday, April 5, 2026**

Sunrise Service at 7:00am (Union Church)

Breakfast at 8:00am

Sunday School at 9:15am

Main Service at 10:30am

## GIVING AND ATTENDANCE FOR LAST SUNDAY

Date	Total Receipts	General Fund	Worship Att.	Sun. Sch. Att.
3/22/26	\$5,555	\$5,385	41	11

## 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- 5<sup>th</sup> 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, Joe Momier, Jane Moss, Christine Norman, Michael Norman, Tricia and Dan Panek, Mike, Debi & Stephen Pisko, Waylon Parker, Alice Parris, 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, Anne Poovey, Randy & Rita Neill, 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*

# Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Palm/Passion Sunday – March 29, 2026

*“<sup>8</sup>And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup>Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup>and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*

- Philippians 2:8-11 -

*Hosannah! Hosannah!* The crowd cried out as Jesus entered Jerusalem, riding on a donkey. The word *hosannah* combines the Hebrew word for “to save” with the Hebrew word for “please” or “now,” creating a powerful and urgent request. The Jews gathering for the Passover in Jerusalem cry out to Jesus, “Please save us! Save us now!” They shouted *hosannah* as a political acclamation, seeking deliverance from Roman rule. They didn’t understand what kind of Savior Jesus is.

Jesus was nothing like the savior they were expecting. They expected Jesus to have some sort of large army. They expected Jesus to demand the attention, respect, and honor of his loyal subjects. And every knee would bow at the name of Jesus, but not in this way. No. Jesus arrived in this world through humble means, and he would continue his ministry and death through the same humble means. This king would take on the form of a servant, not the image the Jews were anticipating of a fighting rebel against the Romans.

Jesus came as a human being, experiencing thirst and hunger, exhaustion and pain. He came to serve others, not himself. He bent down and washed his disciples’ feet. And he remained obedient, obedient unto his death. Death is rarely glamorous, but death for many is at the very least respectful. That was not the case for the King of Kings. Jesus would be humiliated as he was flogged, whipped, and stripped naked for all to see. He would be dishonored, despised, and rejected as he was nailed to and lifted up on a cross, executed as a criminal for everyone to witness, including his own mother, who once cradled him in her arms that first night in Bethlehem.

Why did Jesus go through all of this? He could have fled the scene at any time. No one would have blamed him for going off to the wilderness to pray, only to never return to the hatred that would be there to welcome him back to Jerusalem. Jesus went through the unthinkable because he knew it was the only way to defeat the devil, overcome death, and win the final victory for you. He did all of this because he loves you. We cry out *hosannah*—save us, Lord, from sin, death, and the power of the devil. And he does. He has the final victory!

---

Sola Worship Resource — Weekly Devotional © 2025 Sola Publishing (www.solapublishing.org), written by Rev. Theresa A. Jacobson. Scripture taken from ESV Bible® (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright ©2001—Scripture taken from ESV Bible® (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright ©2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.