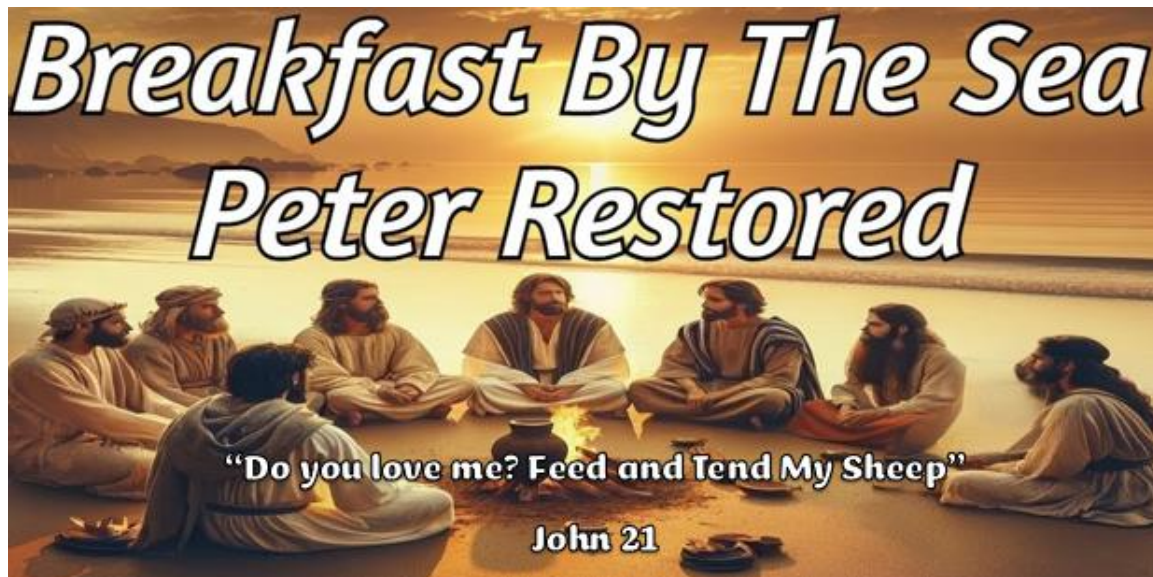


# Third Sunday of Easter

April 19, 2026 10:30 AM



## Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church



NORTH AMERICAN  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

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4536 Hickory Lincolnton Highway, Newton, North Carolina 28658

Church Office: (704) 462-1035 email: [gracenalcnorton@aol.com](mailto:gracenalcnorton@aol.com)

[www.gracelutheran-newton.org](http://www.gracelutheran-newton.org)

Rev. Doug Hefner cell: (980) 234-8848 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

**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 CONFSSION 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.

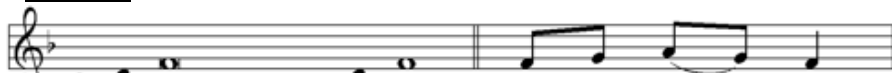
**C: Amen**

**\* GATHERING HYMN**

**“Alleluia, Alleluia! Give Thanks”**

**TCH 359**

**\* 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”



♩ 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.



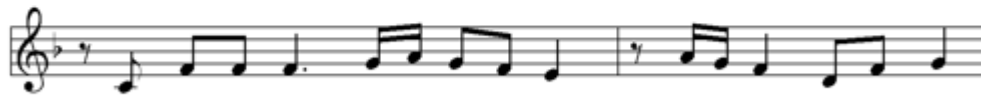
Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God:



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

\* **GREETING**

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen. **C: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

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: Loving God of restoration and new life, fed and nourished by your Word and at your table of grace, strengthen us to serve as your Son's body in the world. Grant that we, like Peter, may follow your Son's command to feed and to tend his sheep; 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: Acts 4: 17-32**

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

<sup>17</sup>But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and filled with jealousy <sup>18</sup>they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison. <sup>19</sup>But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, <sup>20</sup>“Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life.” <sup>21</sup>And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach.

Now when the high priest came, and those who were with him, they called together the council, all the senate of the people of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought. <sup>22</sup>But when the officers came, they did not find them in the prison, so they returned and reported, <sup>23</sup>“We found the prison securely locked and the guards standing at the doors, but when we opened them we found no one inside.” <sup>24</sup>Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were greatly perplexed about them, wondering what this would come to. <sup>25</sup>And someone came and told them, “Look! The men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people.” <sup>26</sup>Then the captain with the officers went and brought them, but not by force, for they were afraid of being stoned by the people.

<sup>27</sup>And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, <sup>28</sup>saying, “We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us.” <sup>29</sup>But Peter and the apostles answered, “***We must obey God rather than men.*** <sup>30</sup>***The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree.*** <sup>31</sup>***God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.*** <sup>32</sup>***And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.***”

## **PSALM 30**

<sup>1</sup>I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up and have not let my foes rejoice over me.

<sup>2</sup>**O Lord my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me.**

<sup>3</sup>O Lord, you have brought up my soul from Sheol; you restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit.

<sup>4</sup>**Sing praises to the Lord, O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name.**

<sup>5</sup>For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

<sup>6</sup>**As for me, I said in my prosperity, “I shall never be moved.”**

<sup>7</sup>By your favor, O Lord, you made my mountain stand strong; you hid your face; I was dismayed.

<sup>8</sup>**To you, O Lord, I cry, and to the Lord I plead for mercy:**

<sup>9</sup>“What profit is there in my death, if I go down to the pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it tell of your faithfulness?”

<sup>10</sup>**Hear, O Lord, and be merciful to me! O Lord, be my helper!”**

<sup>11</sup>You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; you have loosed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness,

<sup>12</sup>**that my glory may sing your praise and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever!**

## **SECOND READING: 1 Peter 2: 4-10**

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God’s sight, and <sup>5</sup>like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. <sup>6</sup>For it stands in scripture: “See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.” <sup>7</sup>This honor, then, is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner,” <sup>8</sup> and “A stone that makes them stumble and a rock that makes them fall.” They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. <sup>9</sup>But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. <sup>10</sup>Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

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”**

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the  
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

**GOSPEL: John 21: 1-19**

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

<sup>1</sup>After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. <sup>2</sup>Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. <sup>3</sup>Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.” They said to him, “We will go with you.” They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. <sup>4</sup>Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>5</sup>Jesus said to them, “Children, do you have any fish?” They answered him, “No.” <sup>6</sup>He said to them, “Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. <sup>7</sup>That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. <sup>8</sup>The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off. <sup>9</sup>When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. <sup>10</sup>Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.” <sup>11</sup>So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. <sup>12</sup>Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” Now none of the disciples dared ask him, “Who are you?” They knew it was the Lord. <sup>13</sup>Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. <sup>14</sup>This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead. <sup>15</sup>When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.” <sup>16</sup>He said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.” <sup>17</sup>He said to him the third time, “Simon, son

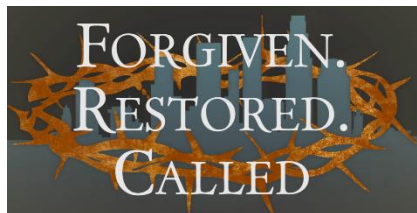
of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.”<sup>18</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.”<sup>19</sup> (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, “Follow me.”

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

*The congregation may be seated.*

### **CHILDREN’S MESSAGE**

### **SERMON**



*“The Amazing Love of Our Risen Lord Forgives, Restores, and Sends Us Out to Love in His Name!”*

*Pastor Doug*

### **\*HYMN OF THE DAY**

**“Because He Lives”**

**TCH 358**

### **\*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**

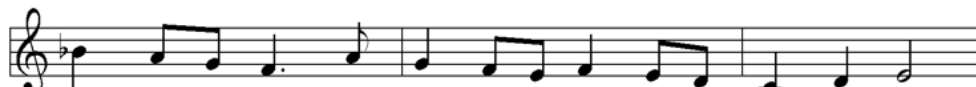
\* **OFFERTORY** Let the Vineyards



☐ 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: Blessed are you, C: O God, ruler of heaven and earth. Day by day you shower us with blessings. As you have raised us to new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts, ready to praise you and to respond to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

## DIALOGUE

P: The Lord be with you. C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts. C: We lift them to the Lord our God.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is good and right to give God our thanks and praise.

\* 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

☞ 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.

### COMMUNION BLESSING AND PRAYER

P: Life-giving God, in the mystery of Christ's resurrection you send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life, and the bread of life to nourish your people. Send us forth as witnesses to your Son's resurrection, that we may show your glory to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

C: Amen.

\* BLESSING

\* SENDING HYMN

“Victory in Jesus”

TCH 353

\* **DISMISSAL**

P: Let us go forth now in the peace of our risen Lord and love God and our neighbor in word and deed.

**C: Thanks be to God!**

**POSTLUDE**

**ALTAR FLOWERS** are given to the Glory of God and in memory of Helen Leatherman at her birthday by the Leatherman family.



**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, 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, 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, Terry & John Barnett, Ashlee Bumgardner, Clinton Childers, Evelyn Childers, Peggy Klutz, Anne Poovey, Randy & Rita Neill, Donald Smith, Scott Speagle, and the family of Martha Young. 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:**

Andrew Crouse – April 8      Jennifer Scott – April 11  
April 13 – Rick Bivens      Shelly Scronce – April 16  
April 18 – Cole Leatherman      Libby Travis – April 22  
Tim Leatherman – April 29

**COMING UP AT GRACE THIS WEEK**

**Today: Third Sunday of Easter**

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

**Monday:** 6:00pm – Leadership Ministry Board meeting

**Wednesday:** 6:30pm – Evening Vespers Service

**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.

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!

**Upcoming Dates:**

- Fri/Sat May 1&2: Carolina’s Mission District Convocation in Salisbury, NC.
- Sunday, May 3 Fifth Sunday of Easter
- Sunday, May 10, Sixth Sunday of Easter, Mother’s Day, Gifts for Mothers
- Sunday, May 18, Seventh Sunday of Easter / Celebration of the Ascension of Our Lord
- Sunday, May 24, The Day of Pentecost, we will honor our veterans who have died in serving our nation (Memorial Day is Monday, May 25)
- Sunday, May 31 Holy Trinity Sunday
- Sunday, May 31 – Thursday, June 4 Illumination Station VBS (see announcement)
- Sunday, June 7 2<sup>nd</sup> Sun aft Pentecost
- Sunday, June 14, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sun aft Pentecost (evening social to welcome Day Campers)
- Mon-Friday, June 15-19, Solid Rock Day Camp Hosted by Grace, 9am-4pm
- Sunday, June 21, 4<sup>th</sup> Sun aft Pentecost, Father’s Day, Gifts for Fathers

**GIVING AND ATTENDANCE FOR LAST SUNDAY**

Date	Offering		Attendance	
	Total Receipts	General Fund	Worship	Sunday School
4/12/2026	\$ 2,087.00	\$ 2,005.00	41	7

*Ministers of Grace – All the People of Grace*  
*Pastor – Reverend Doug Hefner      Board President – Tim Eckard*  
*Lector – Todd Childers      Youth Leader – Stormy Shull*  
*Altar Preparation – Cindy Bivens & Nicky Jarrett*  
*Communion Assistants – Tina Hefner & Nicky Jarrett*  
*Ushers – Jack Wilfong & Allen Biggerstaff*  
*Offering Counters – Todd Childers & Jeff Scronce*