

# **Eighth Sunday After Pentecost**

**July 19, 2026      10:30 AM**



LIKE THE  
CLAY IN THE  
POTTER'S  
HAND SO  
ARE YOU IN  
MY HAND

**JEREMIAH 18:6b**

## **Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church**



NORTH AMERICAN  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

**4536 Hickory Lincolnton Highway, Newton, North Carolina 28658**

**Church Office: (704) 462-1035 email: [gracenalcnewton@aol.com](mailto:gracenalcnewton@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 - Thursday 8am to 12pm**

**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 all mercy and consolation, come to the aid of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that, attentive to your Word, we may confess our sins, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of 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** Gracious God,

**C have mercy on us. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things done and left undone. Uphold us by your Spirit so that we may live and serve you in newness of life, to the honor and glory of your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

**P** Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life in the name of the Father, +Son and 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.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let your merciful ears, O Lord, be open to the prayers of your humble servants; that you may hear our petitions. In all things, help us to ask for what will please you; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

*The congregation may be seated.*

**FIRST READING: Jeremiah 18: 1-11**

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: <sup>2</sup>“Come, go down to the potter’s house, and there I will let you hear my words.” <sup>3</sup> So I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was working at his wheel. <sup>4</sup> The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter’s hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him.

<sup>5</sup> Then the word of the Lord came to me: <sup>6</sup> Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done? says the Lord. Just like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. <sup>7</sup> At one moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, <sup>8</sup> but if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will change my mind about the disaster that I intended to bring on it. <sup>9</sup> And at another moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, <sup>10</sup> but if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will change my mind about the good that I had intended to do to it. <sup>11</sup> Now, therefore, say to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: Thus says the Lord: Look, I am a potter shaping evil against you and devising a plan against you. Turn now, all of you, from your evil way, and amend your ways and your doings.

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

**PSALM 119: 57-64**

<sup>57</sup> The Lord is my portion; I promise to keep your words.

<sup>58</sup> **I entreat your favor with all my heart; be gracious to me according to your promise.**

<sup>59</sup> When I think on my ways, I turn my feet to your testimonies;

<sup>60</sup> **I hasten and do not delay to keep your commandments.**

<sup>61</sup> Though the cords of the wicked ensnare me, I do not forget your law.

<sup>62</sup> **At midnight I rise to praise you, because of your righteous rules.**

<sup>63</sup>I am a companion of all who fear you, of those who keep your precepts.

<sup>64</sup>**The earth, O Lord, is full of your steadfast love; teach me your statutes!**

## **SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 4:1-15**

Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. <sup>2</sup> We have renounced the shameful, underhanded ways; we refuse to practice cunning or to falsify God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God. <sup>3</sup> And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. <sup>4</sup> In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing clearly the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. <sup>5</sup> For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus's sake. <sup>6</sup> For it is the God who said, "Light will shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

<sup>7</sup> But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. <sup>8</sup> We are afflicted in every way but not crushed, perplexed but not driven to despair, <sup>9</sup> persecuted but not forsaken, struck down but not destroyed, <sup>10</sup> always carrying around in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies. <sup>11</sup> For we who are living are always being handed over to death for Jesus's sake, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our mortal flesh. <sup>12</sup> So death is at work in us but life in you.

<sup>13</sup> But just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture—"I believed, and so I spoke"—we also believe, and therefore we also speak, <sup>14</sup> because we know that the one who raised Jesus will also raise us with Jesus and will present us with you in his presence. <sup>15</sup> Indeed, everything is for your sake, so that grace, when it has extended to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

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

*The congregation is invited to stand.*

**\* GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

**"Change My Heart, O God"**

**TCH 654**

**\*GOSPEL: Matthew 11: 25-30**

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

<sup>25</sup>Jesus declared, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; <sup>26</sup>yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. <sup>27</sup>All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son

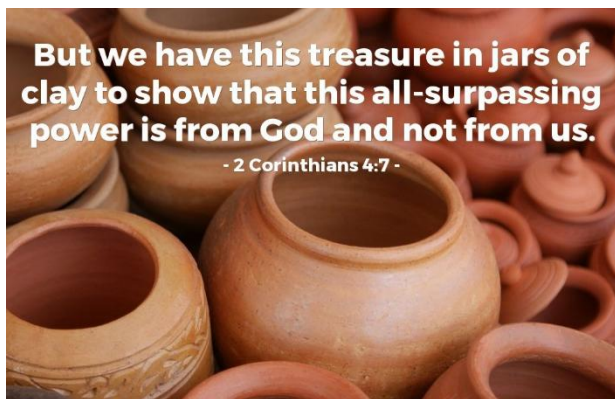
and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. <sup>28</sup>Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup>For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

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

*The congregation may be seated.*

### **CHILDREN’S MESSAGE**

### **SERMON**



*“Take me, and mold me, and use, fill me I give my life to the Potter’s hand*

*Call me, You guide me, You lead me, walk beside me I give my life to the Potter’s hand!”*

*Pastor Doug*

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

**“Have Thine Own Way, Lord”**

**TCH 591**

### **\*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.**

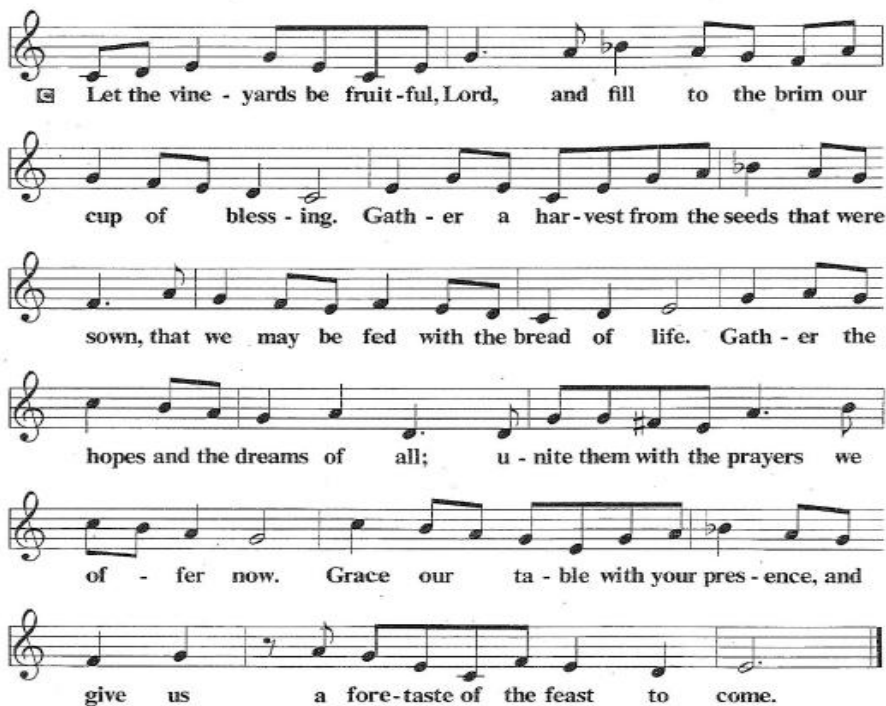
*Worshippers may greet one another with "the Peace of Christ."*

*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**



The musical score is written on six staves of music. The lyrics are written below the notes. The music is in a simple, melodic style with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a common time signature (C). 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: Merciful Father, C: we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us – ourselves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of Him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our 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.**

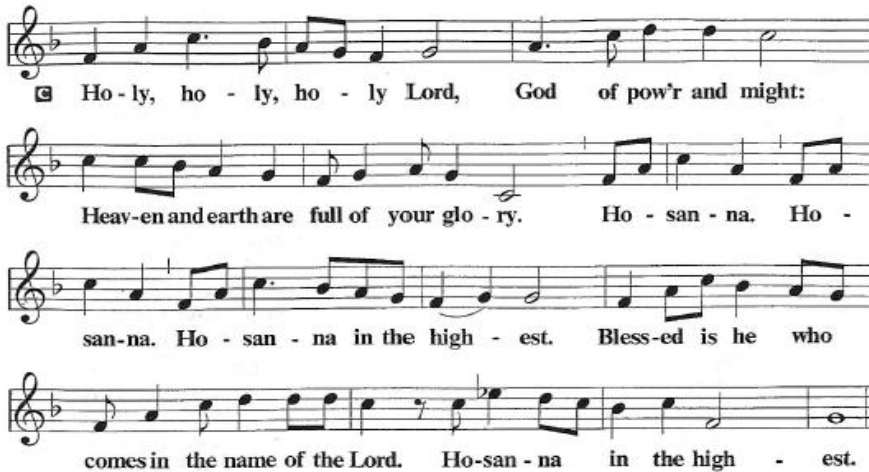
P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

**\*PREFACE PRAYER** “It is indeed right and salutary . . . “

**LBW p. 68**

**\*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**

**\* 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 final note of the fourth staff is a whole note G, followed by a double bar line.

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: 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 truth and freedom this day and evermore, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **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.

### \*SENDING HYMN

### "How Great Thou Art"

TCH 147

### \*DISMISSAL

P: Lovingly shaped by the potters hand, let us carry the treasure of the gospel to all the world. Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord and our neighbor! thanks to God .  
**C: Thanks be to God!**

## **POSTLUDE**

**ALTAR FLOWERS** are given to the Glory of God and in honor of Morley Sipe's first birthday by Gene and Frankie Crouse.



### **In the Grace Church Family:**

Jeffrey Bivens, Rick & Cindy Bivens, Pat Dietz, Allen and Kay Hatchett, Lorene Heavner, Larry & Brenda Jarrett, Martha Johnson, Faye Lane, Harvey Leatherman, Phil & Malinda Leatherman, Betty Matheson, Joe Momier, Jane Moss, Christine Norman, Michael Norman, Tricia and Dan Panek, Mike, Debi & Stephen Pisko, Alice Parris, Todd Setzer, Helen Smith, Ethan Starnes, Sandi Tallant, Libby Travis, Shirley Warlick, Ken 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, John Barnett, Larry Buff, Ashlee Bumgardner, Clinton Childers, Evelyn Childers, Marilyn Childers, the family of Mike Cline, Ann & Jim Harrelson, the family, the family of Lynette Momier, Dennis Morgan, Randy & Rita Neill, Jolene Heavner Shuford, the family of Richard Ramsey, the family of Jolene Heavner Shuford, 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 JULY BIRTHDAY TO:**

**July 13** Lorene Heavner

**July 13** Frankie Crouse

**July 18** Emily Sipe

**July 20** Michael Scronce

**July 22** Scott Whisnant

**July 22** Nicky Jarrett

**July 24** Sherry Biggerstaff

**July 27** Jack Wilfong

**July 28** Harvey Leatherman

**July 30** Shirley Warlick

## **COMING UP AT GRACE THIS WEEK:**

**Today: Eighth Sunday After Pentecost**

9:15am – Sunday School

10:30am - Worship Celebration

## GIVING AND ATTENDANCE FOR LAST SUNDAY

|           | Offering       |              | Attendance |               |
|-----------|----------------|--------------|------------|---------------|
| Date      | Total Receipts | General Fund | Worship    | Sunday School |
| 7/12/2026 | \$ 2,092       | \$ 1,944     | 46         | 9             |

## UPCOMING DATES:

*Please review these dates and provide feedback or additional dates to Pastor Doug and the Board. Once the dates are finalized, we will share this information with the community in a postcard mailing.*

- +Sun, Aug. 2: Wilfong Family Reunion – Fellowship Hall – 1:00pm
- +Sun, Aug. 16: Leonard Family Reunion – Fellowship Hall – 1:00pm
- +Sun., Aug. 23: Back to School Service 10:30am, Blessing of Backpacks, Birthday Luncheon for Betty Wilfong's 80<sup>th</sup>! The Congregation is invited – bring a dish to share.
- + Sun., Sept. 13: Grandparents Sunday, 10:30am – Gift/Prayers/Blessing for Grandparents
- +Wed., Sept. 16: Grace Senior Luncheon – 12:00pm
- + Sun, Sept 20: Homecoming Worship Service followed by Covered Dish Luncheon in Shelter
- + Sat., Oct. 3: Blessing of the Animals Service at Grace Outdoor Shelter 5:00pm
- +Sun., Oct. 4: Food for the Poor Sunday 10:30am; Catawba Co. Walk for Hunger 3:00pm
- + October Possible Bazaar (Yard sale) with Octoberfest foods as a fundraiser for hunger.
- +Wed., Oct. 21: Grace Senior Luncheon – 12:00pm
- + Sun, Oct. 25: Reformation Sunday Service at 10:30am
- + Sat., Oct. 31: Grace Fall Festival and Trunk or Treat 5pm-7pm
- + Sunday, Nov. 1: 10:30am All Saints' Day Service, Worshippers light a candle in remembrance of a loved one in heaven.
- +Sun, Nov. 15: Whisnant Family Reunion – Fellowship Hall – 1:00pm
- +Wed., Nov. 18: Grace Senior Luncheon – 12:00pm
- + Nov. 22 : Christ the King Sunday 10:30am, Last Sunday in Church Year
- +Wed, Nov. 25 : Community Thanksgiving Service 6pm Dinner, 7pm Worship
- +Sat., Nov. 28: Hanging of the Greens, 10:00 am
- + Nov. 29: Advent Season 11/29:12/24 begins with First Sunday of Advent.
- +Wed., Dec. 2: Fred T. Foard Seniors Luncheon – 12:00pm at Grace
- +Sat., Dec. 6: Breakfast with Santa, Pancakes with fixings, Crafts, Music, Storytime
- +Wed., Dec. 16: Grace Senior Luncheon – 12:00pm
- +Thur., Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Candlelight and Holy Communion Service 5pm

**+Sun., Jan. 3, 2027: New Year's Sunday Service - 10:30am**

### **PICTORIAL DIRECTORY**

We would like to create a new updated pictorial directory for our congregation. Rather than going to the expense of hiring an outside company to do this we would like to complete this project in-house. But we will need your help. Please email (gracenalcnewton@aol.com) to us a digital photo of your choosing of you and your family members who worship at Grace. It does not have to be a formal portrait but should clearly show everyone's faces. If you do not have one, we can help you take one. We would like to put this together as soon as possible so please start sending in your photos now.

**ASHURE MINISTRY FOOD ASK** for the month of July is snacks for kids. We are doing great things at Grace in helping feed the hungry in our own community. Year-to-date the disciples of Grace have donated 519 pounds of food to Ashure in addition to the giving for our Blessing Box. Moving forward, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month will be designated as Ashure Sunday. We would like to collect any food donations to help us catch up with our giving at Ashure.



### **CHRISTMAS SHOEBOXES AVAILABLE NOW**

Many of you like to get an early start on filling shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. Shoeboxes are now available in the choir pews on the right. A label is inside each shoebox. Thanks for helping with this important ministry. Also, special offering envelopes are now available in the Narthex for your gifts. Shipping costs for each shoebox is \$10. Please use these envelopes when your offering includes shipping costs.

*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 – Betty Wilfong*  
*Communion Assistants – Sheila Drum & Betty Wilfong*  
*Ushers – Jeff Scronce & Jack Wilfong*  
*Offering Counters – Todd Childers & Jason Yoder*

**Devotion for Jeremiah 18:1-11**  
**Theme: The Potter and the Clay**  
**Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 18:1-11**

**Reflection:**

In this passage, God instructs Jeremiah to visit the potter's house, where he observes the potter shaping clay. This imagery illustrates God's sovereignty and the transformative power He has over our lives. Just as the potter can reshape the clay, God can mold us according to His purpose, even when we feel flawed or broken.

**Key Points:**

- **God's Sovereignty:** The potter represents God, who has the authority to shape our lives.
- **Transformation:** No matter our past mistakes, God can reshape us into vessels of honor.
- **Repentance:** The passage emphasizes the importance of turning back to God, allowing Him to work in us.

**Prayer:**

Heavenly Father, thank You for being the potter in my life. Help me to trust in Your hands as You shape me. May I be open to Your guidance and willing to be transformed. Amen.

**Application:** Consider areas in your life where you need God's shaping. Spend time in prayer, asking Him to mold you into the person He desires you to be.

**Closing Thought:** Remember, God sees potential in you that you may not see in yourself. Trust in His process of transformation.

**The Potter's Hand by *Darlene Zschech***

Beautiful Lord, wonderful Saviour I know for sure

All of my days are held in Your hands

And crafted into Your perfect plan

And You gently call me into Your presence

Guiding me by Your holy spirit

Teach me, dear Lord, to live all of my life Through Your eyes

I'm captured by Your holy calling Set me apart

I know You're drawing me to Yourself Lead me Lord, I pray

Take me, and mold me, and use me, fill me I give my life to the Potter's hand

Call me, You guide me, You lead me, walk beside me

I give my life to the Potter's hand