

Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost

August 23, 2026 10:30 AM



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church



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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: Let us return to the Lord with all your heart and rend your hearts and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. *(Joel 2)*

Silence is kept for reflection and confession of our sins before God and one another.

P: Gracious God,

C: have mercy upon 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.

The minister stands and addresses the congregation.

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God 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 our sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **C: Amen.**

*** GATHERING HYMN**
(verses 1, 3, 5, and 6)

“Earth and All Stars”

LBW 558

*** 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 us pray. O God, our teacher and guide, you draw us to yourself and welcome us as beloved children. Help us to lay aside all envy and selfish ambition, that we may walk in your ways of wisdom and understanding as servants of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

The congregation may be seated.

FIRST READING: Proverbs 1: 1-7

The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel: ² To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, ³ to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity; ⁴ to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth — ⁵ Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance, ⁶ to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles. ⁷ The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

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

PSALM 90: 12-17

¹² So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.

¹³ **Return, O Lord! How long? Have pity on your servants!**

¹⁴ Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

¹⁵ **Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us, and for as many years as we have seen evil.**

¹⁶ Let your work be shown to your servants, and your glorious power to their children.

¹⁷ **Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; yes, establish the work of our hands!**

SECOND READING: James 1: 2-8, 3: 13-18

² Count it all joy, my brothers and sisters, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³ for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴ And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. ⁶ But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Chapter 3: ¹³ Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. ¹⁵ This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. ¹⁶ For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. ¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. ¹⁸ And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

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”



***GOSPEL: Mark 10: 13-16**

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

¹³ And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴ But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. ¹⁵ Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” ¹⁶ And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

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

The congregation may be seated.

BLESSING AND PRAYERS FOR STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND STAFF

SERMON



“Return, Repent, and Be Revived in the Lord our God, for God is Gracious and Merciful, Slow to Anger, and Abounding in Steadfast Love!”

Pastor Doug

***HYMN OF THE DAY**

“Be Thou My Vision”

1. Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me save that thou art.
Thou my best thought by day and by night;
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.
2. Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true Word;
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord.
Thou my great Father, I thy dear child;
Thou in me dwelling, with thee reconciled.
3. Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise;
Thou mine inheritance, now and always.
Thou and thou only, first in my heart,
High King of Heaven, my treasure thou art.
4. High King of Heaven, my victory won,
May I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heav'ns Sun!
Heart of my heart, whatever befall,
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

***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 in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below each staff. 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: Heavenly Father, as we gratefully bring our offerings before You, grant us the wisdom to use these gifts for Your glory. Help us to discern how best to serve others and to spread Your love through our actions. As we partake in this communion, help us to understand the depth of Your sacrifice and love in Your Son our Lord Jesus. May this sacred meal strengthen us to live in accordance with Your teachings and to share Your light and love with the world; in the name of Jesus.

C: 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.

*** 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 image displays the musical notation for the Communion Song 'Lamb of God'. It consists of four staves of music, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff begins with a square icon and the lyrics 'Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have'. The second staff continues with 'mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the'. The third staff continues with 'world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the'. The fourth staff concludes with 'sin of the world; grant us peace.'.

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, Your Son Jesus welcomed the children and blessed them. You continue to welcome your people and feed us with the True Bread from heaven, Jesus Christ our Lord! Nourished with your love and wisdom, You send us out to welcome and love others in Jesus' name.

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 Loves Me This I Know”**

1. Jesus loves me! this I know, For the Bible tells me so.

Little ones to Him belong; they are weak but He is strong.

Chorus: Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!

Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

2. Jesus loves me! He who died heaven's gate to open wide;

He will wash away my sin, let His little child come in. Chorus

3. Jesus loves me! He will stay close beside me all the way.

Thou hast bled and died for me, I will henceforth live for Thee. Chorus

***DISMISSAL**

P: Filled with the life-giving wisdom of God, let us go in joy and peace to tell others about Jesus and to love others in His name.

C: Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the Glory of God and in honor of past and present members of Grace Lutheran Church by Allen and Sherry Biggerstaff.



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, Ashlee Bumgardner, Clinton Childers, Evelyn Childers, Marilyn Childers, family of Robin Doyle, Alan Fulbright, Randy & Rita Neill, Anita Sabino, Scott Speagle, and Dale Smith. 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 AUGUST BIRTHDAY TO:

August 1 Gary Leatherman	August 1 James Hall	August 7 Martha Johnson
August 12 Jane Moss	August 23 Betty Wilfong	August 30 Pat Dietz

COMING UP AT GRACE THIS WEEK:

Today: Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost

9:30am – Ministry Teams Workshop

10:30am - Worship Celebration with Blessing of Students and Teachers

After Worship: Betty Wilfong Birthday Celebration in Fellowship Hall

GIVING AND ATTENDANCE FOR LAST SUNDAY

Date	Offering		Attendance	
	Total Receipts	General Fund	Worship	Sunday School
8/16/2026	\$1,718	\$1,570	39	18

UPCOMING DATES:

- + *Sun., Sept. 13: Grandparents Sunday, 10:30am – Gift/Prayers/Blessing for Grandparents Jarrett Family Reunion - Fellowship Hall - 1:00pm*
- + *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*
- + *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*

MINISTRY TEAM MEETINGS TODAY!

All ministry teams will meet today at 9:30am to begin the work of planning the work of Grace Church through the beginning of 2027.

KNOW YOUR CHURCH SURVEY

As a part of discovering God's vision for His Church here at Grace, you are invited to participate in a "Know Your Church" survey that will help us to see our areas of strength and also our growing edges. Please click the link below, answer questions to the best of your ability, and then submit. Your responses will be tabulated with everyone else who responds.

Know Your Church Survey Link <https://churchhealthreport.com/survey/?s=YQ3U7AB>

Up to 60 people can respond to the survey. If you want to do the survey but do not have a computer, smart phone, or internet, please see Pastor Doug or Todd and we can get you set up on one of the computers here at the church.

PICTORIAL DIRECTORY

We would like to create a new updated pictorial directory for our congregation. Please email 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. If you would like someone to take a picture for you please see Todd Childers immediately after worship.

CATAWBA COUNTY HUNGER WALK

Ashure Ministry, Hickory Soup Kitchen, and The Corner Table are proud to come together to host the 2026 Catawba County Hunger Walk! We invite you to join us for this meaningful community event dedicated to fighting hunger right here in Catawba County. Proceeds from this year's walk will support all three organizations as we work together to provide food, hope, and dignity to our neighbors facing food insecurity.

The Hunger Walk is more than just a fundraiser—it's a powerful way to bring our community together while raising awareness about the ongoing challenge of hunger in our area. We humbly ask for your support. Every dollar raised will be divided equally among Ashure Ministry, Hickory Soup Kitchen, and The Corner Table, and every dollar goes directly toward helping feed those who need it most.

Thank you for standing with us in this shared mission of compassion and care. Together, we can take meaningful steps toward ending hunger in Catawba County. All walkers who register and raise a minimum of \$25 before August 30th will receive a walk t-shirt. David and Belinda Wilfong are our church team captains. Please reach out to David and Belinda if you have any questions. Paper registration forms are available in the Narthex and should be returned to David or Belinda Wilfong. If you choose to register online, please visit cchungerwalk.com and register under our team name which is ***Grace Lutheran NALC Newton***. The password is ***hungerwalk2026\$\$*** and is required for online registration. The forms required are also included in this newsletter.

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 – Frankie Crouse

Communion Assistants – Nicky Jarrett & Shelly Scronce

Ushers – Jacob Jarrett & Tim Leatherman

Offering Counters – Todd Childers & Gary Leatherman

God's Wisdom for Back to School and for Life!



School can be scary, you are learning new things and becoming familiar with new ideas. There will be new students in your class, you will have a new teacher, and the material will be more challenging than the year before. So why go back?

God wants us to be full of wisdom. Do you know what wisdom means? Wisdom is having quality in what you know, it is having the best of the best knowledge. Let's see what the Bible says about wisdom.

Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance, to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction. (Proverbs 1:5-7)

Let's break this down, the first sentence is explaining that we should increase what we are learning, we should ask God for more wisdom and

more guidance so that we can understand.

The second sentence says, "the fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge." Do you think this means that we should be afraid of God? Of course we should not be afraid of God, what this sentence means is that we should honor or revere God. Those who honor God have wisdom, but those who do not choose to honor God are fools.

We should always desire to learn and grow in wisdom, but above all of our classes and above all of our studies, we should desire to learn who God is first! We grow in our knowledge of God and therefore, wisdom, by reading God's Word. Keep your Bible in your backpack at school so that you can always take it out and study God's Word so that you can grow in wisdom.

Prayer: Dear God, thank you that we get to go back to school and be filled with knowledge and wisdom. We pray that our hearts can always be yours, and as we learn our reading and math, let us also learn to study your Word and grow knowledge of You and in Godly wisdom. We love you and we honor you! In the name of Jesus. Amen