

# Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost

August 30, 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.**

\* **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: Lord God, rule and govern our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit, that while keeping the end of all things in mind, we may be stirred up to holiness in this life and come to be with you forever in that life to come. Grant this, we pray, through Jesus Christ, your Son, 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: Malachi 3:1-7b, 4: 1-6**

<sup>1</sup>“Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. <sup>2</sup>But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap. <sup>3</sup>He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the Lord. <sup>4</sup>Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years. <sup>5</sup>Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts. <sup>6</sup>For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. <sup>7</sup>From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts.”

<sup>1</sup>“For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. <sup>2</sup>But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. <sup>3</sup>And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>4</sup>Remember the law of my servant Moses, the statutes and rules that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel. <sup>5</sup>Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. <sup>6</sup>And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.”

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

**PSALM 26: 1-8**

<sup>1</sup> Vindicate me, O Lord, for I have walked in my integrity, and I have trusted in the Lord without wavering.

<sup>2</sup> **Prove me, O Lord, and try me; test my heart and my mind.**

<sup>3</sup> For your steadfast love is before my eyes, and I walk in your faithfulness.

<sup>4</sup> **I do not sit with men of falsehood, nor do I consort with hypocrites.**

<sup>5</sup> I hate the assembly of evildoers, and I will not sit with the wicked.

<sup>6</sup> **I wash my hands in innocence and go around your altar, O Lord,**

<sup>7</sup> proclaiming thanksgiving aloud, and telling all your wondrous deeds.

<sup>8</sup> O Lord, I love the habitation of your house and the place where your glory dwells.

**SECOND READING: 1 Peter 1: 3-9**

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup> to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. <sup>6</sup> In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, <sup>7</sup> so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. <sup>8</sup> Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, <sup>9</sup> obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

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: Matthew 16: 21-26**

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

<sup>21</sup>Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.

<sup>22</sup>And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” <sup>23</sup>But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.” <sup>24</sup>Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. <sup>25</sup>For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. <sup>26</sup>For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?

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

*The congregation may be seated.*

**CHILDREN’S MESSAGE**

**SERMON**

*“Refined, Restored, and Raised to New Life in the Fire of God’s Love in Christ!”*

*Pastor Doug*

**\*HYMN OF THE DAY**

**“Light the Fire”**

1. I stand to praise you But I fall to my knees  
My spirit is willing But my flesh is so weak

**Chorus**

**So light the fire (light the fire) in my soul (in my soul)  
Fan the flame (fan the flame) make me whole (make my spirit whole)  
Lord you know (Lord you know) where I've been (where I've been)  
So light the fire in my heart again**

2. I feel your arms around me As your healing begins  
Your Spirit surrounds me like a rushing wind (Chorus)

*CCLI Song # 332454 Bill Maxwell © 1986 Bloodsmith Music For use solely with the SongSelect®*

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## **\*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: Compassionate God, you receive us again into your arms and invite us to be nourished as your dear children at your table of grace. Receive our offering of thanksgiving and praise. As we receive the body and blood of Christ Jesus, transform and strengthen our lives so that we might shine with the light of Christ as we share ourselves and your gifts with all the world; in the name of Jesus, the Bread of Life.

**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 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 word "grant" is underlined with a slur over it, and "us" is also underlined.

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: Lord Jesus, Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, You have refreshed us again with the heavenly food of your body and blood. As we go now, nourished in faith and love, be present with us today, tomorrow and forever so that we will tell and live out the story of your never-ending love in the precious and powerful name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. **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      “Lord, Dismiss Us With Thy Blessing”**

**TCH 237**

**\*DISMISSAL**

P: Refined in the fire of God's love in Christ, we go now in Christ's peace and wholeness to share His love in word and deed. **C: Thanks be to God!**

**POSTLUDE**

**ALTAR FLOWERS** are given to the Glory of God and in honor of the disciples of Grace Church by Jacob and Tawanna Jarrett.



**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, family of James McDaniel, 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: Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost**

9:30am – Ministry Teams Workshop

10:30am - Worship Celebration

**Wednesday:**

12:00pm - Fred T. Foard Seniors Luncheon at Ebenezer UMC

6:30pm - Evening Vespers Service

## **GIVING AND ATTENDANCE FOR LAST SUNDAY**

| Date      | Offering       |              | Attendance |               |
|-----------|----------------|--------------|------------|---------------|
|           | Total Receipts | General Fund | Worship    | Sunday School |
| 8/23/2026 | \$1,497        | \$1,497      | 44         | 25            |

## **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*

## **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**

*The deadline for submitting your pictures is Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup>.* Please email to us a digital photo 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! 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. If you choose to register online, please visit [cchungerwalk.com](http://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.

## **DEVOTION**

The Book of Malachi is the last of the twelve Old Testament writings collectively referred to as the Minor Prophets. Malachi is one of the many writings considered a part of the second of three major Old Testament divisions known as the Prophets. The other two sections are the Law and the Writings (Psalms) (Luke 24:44).

Date Written, Location, Author, and Time Period

The book of Malachi, written in ancient Israel (more precisely ancient Judah), was penned around 400 B.C. Malachi's name means "my messenger." His book, unfortunately, reveals nothing about the prophet's personal life. Persia's Cyrus the Great issued the command to allow Jews to return to Judah and Jerusalem, for the rebuilding of the temple, in 539 B.C. (Ezra 6, 2Chronicles 36:22 - 23). It will take, however, until 516 B.C. for the reconstruction of the magnificent temple to be completed. Malachi wrote his book after the temple was rebuilt and the Levitical priesthood was again serving in Jerusalem.

Chapter. 1: Malachi opens with God's people doubting his love. The Lord says in 1:2 “I have loved you...” The Lord's response to their doubt was to reveal he chose to greatly favor and bless Jacob (the patriarch from whom came Israel's twelve tribes) above his twin brother Esau (Edom). The Lord then questions his priests as to why they do not properly revere him (Malachi 1:6).

God then responds to questions regarding how his name is despised among the priests and how he is defiled among them (Malachi 1:6 - 10). He also asserts that his name will be great not only among his priests but the entire world (1:11 *“For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the Lord of hosts”*)

The chapter closes with the Lord's condemnation of offerings that are far from the quality deserving a great King! 1:13- *“You bring what has been taken by violence or is lame or sick, and this you bring as your offering! Shall I accept that from your hand? says the Lord.”*

Chapter. 2: God opens the chapter by warning his priests that their unwillingness to repent and change their ways will bring severe consequences. *If you will not listen, if you will not take it to heart to give honor to my name, says the Lord of hosts, then I will send the curse upon you and I will curse your blessings. (2:2).* The Lord then challenges those who serve him to live up to his high standards (2:7). The entire tribe of Judah is then condemned for marrying the pagan (non-Israelites) women around them (2:11-12). This prohibition, given at the time of Moses, was meant to keep the Israelites from falling into idolatry (Ex 34:11-6, Deut 7:3-4, Joshua 23:12 -13). Judah is also chastised for its men breaking their marriage covenants with their wives and divorcing them (Malachi 2:13-16). The chapter closes with the Lord revealing he is wearied by his people claiming it is better to pursue evil than good (Malachi 2:17).

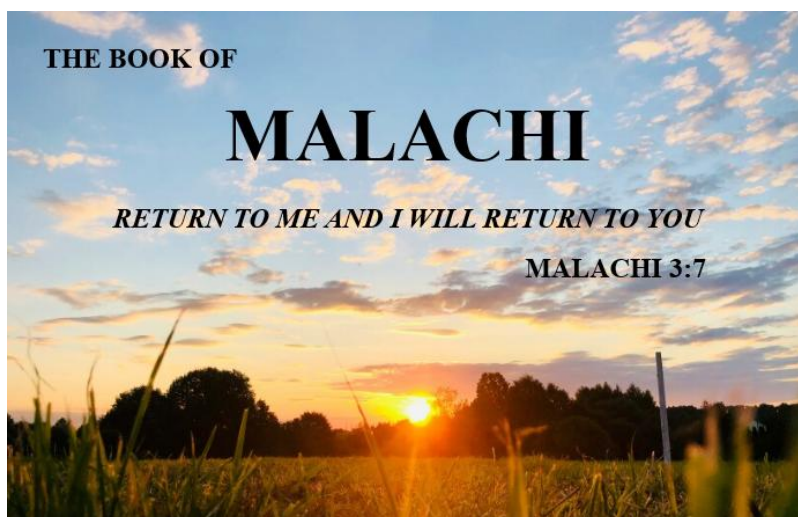
Chapter. 3: Chapter 3 opens with a two-fold prophecy. The first prophecy foretells of someone who will prepare the people for the Lord's arrival (Malachi 3:1). This prophecy is fulfilled in the ministry of John the Baptist. The second prophecy is that the Lord himself, the "messenger of the covenant," will appear suddenly at Jerusalem's temple (Malachi 3:1). This event took place during Jesus' first Passover of his ministry (John 2:13 - 21). God then reveals he will judge those indulging in all kinds of sin and injustice (Malachi 3:5). God reveals how important our tithes are to our worship of the Lord... God blesses us more than we can ever give. (3:8-10).

The Lord then takes issue with the people believing that it is vain and useless to serve him (3:13 -15). The Lord assures those who honor Him in faith that their service has not been in vain. They also will be preserved and delivered: 3:17 *“They shall be mine, says*

*the Lord of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him.”*

**Chapter. 4:** The final chapter of Malachi warns that those who indulge in wickedness and refuse to repent will receive the ultimate penalty in the “Day of the Lord.” They will be burned up such that nothing will remain of them, a foreshadowing of the final judgment where the wicked are tossed into the lake of fire (Rev 20:13-15). Those who obey the Lord, however, are promised to be healed and greatly blessed -Malachi 4:2 *“But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings.”*

The chapter closes with one final prediction that someone with the power of Elijah the prophet will appear to turn people's hearts toward repentance (4:5–6 *“And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers.”* ). This prophecy was primarily fulfilled in John the Baptist's ministry (Luke 1:17, Matthew 11:7 - 10) and brought into reality through the reconciling love of God in Christ Jesus through Jesus’ life, ministry, death and resurrection!



*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*