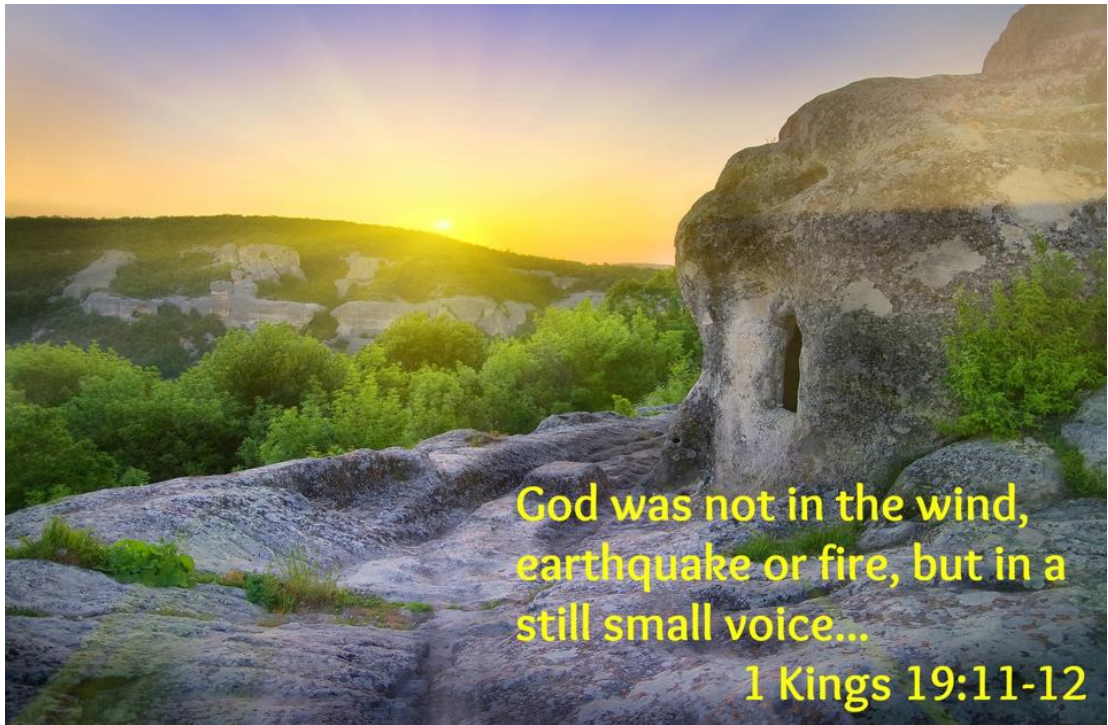


Twenty First Sunday After Pentecost



October 18, 2026 10:30 AM

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

www.gracelutheran-newton.org

Rev. Doug Hefner cell: (980) 234-8848 email: 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: Let us return to the Lord with all our 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.

P: God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through our Lord's death and resurrection, Christ has defeated death and sin, reconciled us to God and one another, and made us his own beloved sons and daughters. Led by the Holy Spirit, who grants freedom and newness of life, let us rejoice in the Good News that God has granted us 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**

“My Life Flows on in Endless Song”

WOV 781

*** 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: O God, our refuge and strength, since you yourself are the author of our devotion, graciously consider the devout prayers of your Church. May those things which we ask in faith effectively follow by your grace; 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: 1 Kings 19: 1-16

¹Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. ² Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, “So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life like the life of one of them by this time tomorrow.” ³ Then he was afraid; he got up and fled for his life and came to Beer-sheba, which belongs to Judah; he left his servant there. ⁴ But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die, “It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors.” ⁵ Then he lay down under the broom tree and fell asleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, “Get up and eat.” ⁶ He looked, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. He ate and drank and lay down again. ⁷ The angel of the Lord came a second time, touched him, and said, “Get up and eat, or the journey will be too much for you.” ⁸ He got up and ate and drank; then he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God. ⁹ At that place he came to a cave and spent the night there. Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” ¹⁰ He answered, “I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts, for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away.” ¹¹ He said, “Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.” Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind, and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake, ¹² and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire, and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. ¹³ When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then

there came a voice to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁴ He answered, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts, for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away." ¹⁵ Then the Lord said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael as king over Aram. ¹⁶ Also you shall anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel, and you shall anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah as prophet in your place."

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

PSALM 96: 1-4

¹Oh sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth!

²**Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.**

³Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples!

⁴**For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods.**

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 1: 1-10

¹Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace. ²We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, ³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

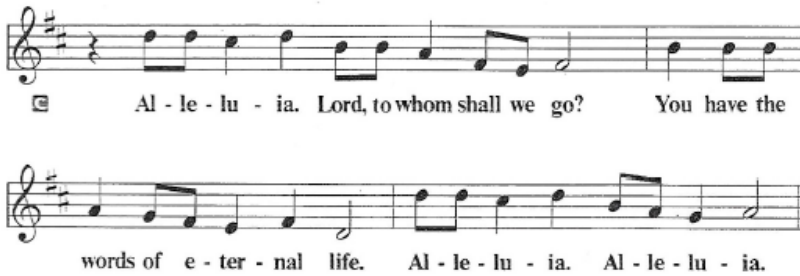
⁴For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything. ⁹For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

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 22: 15-22**

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

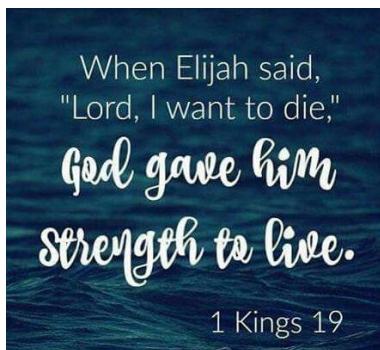
¹⁵Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle him in his words. ¹⁶And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are true and teach the way of God truthfully, and you do not care about anyone’s opinion, for you are not swayed by appearances. ¹⁷Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?” ¹⁸But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why put me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹Show me the coin for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰And Jesus said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” ²¹They said, “Caesar’s.” Then he said to them, “Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” ²²When they heard it, they marveled. And they left him and went away.

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

The congregation may be seated.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

SERMON



“Don’t Give Up! Get Fired Up in God’s Love and Grace for You”

Pastor Doug

***HYMN OF THE DAY**

“Precious Lord, Take My Hand”

WOV 731

***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.**

Worshipers 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 AND PREFACE**

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.

*** 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. Amen.

***SENDING HYMN**

“What a Fellowship ”

WOV 780

***DISMISSAL**

P: Made in God's image and redeemed in Christ, we are the body of Christ called out of the darkness into God's marvelous light! Let us, in faith, hope, and love, render our lives to the Lord as we go forth in joy to proclaim the Good News of God's love in Christ!

C: Thanks be to God!

ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the Glory of God and in memory of Claude and Ann Bivens by Rick and Cindy Bivens.



In the Grace Church Family:

Jeffrey Bivens, Rick & Cindy Bivens, Todd Childers, Pat Dietz, family of Nelson & Sue Fulbright, Allen and Kay Hatchett, Lorene Heavner, Lula Ingle, Larry & Brenda Jarrett, Martha Johnson, Faye

Lane, 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, Ethan Starnes, Sandi Tallant, Libby Travis, Shirley Warlick, Ken Welch, Scott & Carolyn Whisnant, Jack Wilfong, and Nancy Willis.

Nursing Home: Juanita Haas (Trinity Village), Ted Whisnant (Trinity Village), Helen Smith is at Frye Hospital and will be returning Trinity Ridge.

Friends and Relatives in our Prayers: Pray for Peace in Israel and the World, New Covenant Lutheran Mission Church, Ashlee Bumgardner, Danelle Bumgardner, Travis Bumgardner, Helen Candea, Jessica Cassels, Clinton Childers, Evelyn Childers, Tucker Duncan, Alan Fulbright, family of Faith Hedgepath, Charlene Kistler, family of James McDaniel, Ryan McMullen & family & shift, Randy & Rita Neill, Anita Sabino, Scott Speagle, and Kaylee & Graham Stauffer. 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.

COMING UP AT GRACE THIS WEEK

Today: Twenty First Sunday After Pentecost

9:30am – Sunday School

10:30am - Worship Celebration

Monday

6:00pm – Leadership Ministry Board

Wednesday

12:00pm - Grace Prayer Luncheon in Fellowship Hall

6:00pm – Evening Vespers Service

HAPPY OCTOBER BIRTHDAY TO:

10/1	Pastor Doug Hefner	10/3	Juanita Haas	10/7	Debra Hefner
10/9	Don Jarrett	10/9	Jason Yoder	10/10	Joy Heavner
10/13	Todd Childers	10/25	Matt Speagle	10/28	Todd Setzer

UPCOMING EVENTS

+Sat., Oct. 17: Carolinas Lutheran Women 16th Annual Convocation at Faith Lutheran Church - Salisbury. Registration at 8:30am. Program from 9:00am to 2:00pm.

+Wed., Oct. 21: Grace Senior Luncheon – 12:00pm

+Wed., Oct. 21: Evening Vespers Service - 6:00pm

Trunk or Treat Meeting immediately following service (approximately 6:45pm)

+ 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.

+ Sunday, Nov. 1: Immediately following worship - Annual Congregational Meeting to include approval of 2027 spending plan and election of new board members.

GIVING AND ATTENDANCE FOR LAST SUNDAY

	Offering		Attendance	
Date	Total Receipts	General Fund	Worship	Sunday School
10/11/2026	\$3,927	\$2,147	43	9

KNOW YOUR CHURCH SURVEY

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

TRUNK OR TREAT ON OCTOBER 31, 5-7pm



This is a Church-wide event; in other words, we need you to be a part of this. We need as many people as possible to open their car trunk or truck bed to decorate and hand out candy. Some decorate their trunks or have little games for the kids to play to get candy. After Trunk or Treat, we will have hot dogs, chips, and drinks. We may also have the fire pit ready to do smores. We will see if we can get an inflatable to have fun with as well. If you would like to help with this event, please see the Youth and Family Ministry Team. We will have flyers made so that you can invite the community. ***Please plan to attend our Wednesday Evening Vespers service on October 21st. A brief planning meeting will be held immediately after the service (approximately 6:45pm).***

CHRISTMAS SHOEBOXES - DEADLINE NOVEMBER 15TH



The deadline for Operation Christmas Child is fast approaching. Filled shoeboxes must be turned in by Sunday, November 15th. 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 for this important ministry.

BLESSING BOX REMINDERS

Here are a few guidelines for the donations: All food items need to be nonperishable and not opened or repackaged. You can donate other items besides food like hygiene supplies, cleaning supplies, and baby needs such as diapers, etc. You may drop items off directly at the Blessing Box. If the Box is filled please put your donation in the plastic tote on the parsonage porch. If the church is open, there is a shelf in the second Sunday School room on the left that will also be an overflow storage area. The food in the overflow will then be placed as needed in the Blessing Box. The Discipleship Ministry Team will be the group in charge of this ministry. However, we need everyone in the church to donate as you are able and to help restock/check the Blessing Box.

Monthly 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

DEVOTION

1 Kings 19 shows God meeting Elijah in exhaustion, fear, and despair with rest, gentle presence, truth, and renewed purpose. Elijah collapses after the victory at Carmel, yet God restores him through food, sleep, a whisper at Horeb, and a fresh commission, reminding us that divine care often comes quietly and personally.

Elijah's Collapse: Even the Strong Grow Weary

After calling down fire on Mount Carmel, Elijah expected national repentance. Instead, Jezebel threatened his life, and he fled in fear. His despair was deep enough that he prayed to die under a broom tree. This moment shows that spiritual victories do not make us immune to burnout.

Elijah's unmet expectations and exhaustion broke him.

Devotional reflection:

Even faithful believers can reach a point where pressure feels unbearable. God does not condemn Elijah's weakness—He meets him in it.

God's Gentle Care: Rest Before Revelation

God does not begin with a sermon. He begins with sleep, food, and water—twice. Elijah's physical depletion mattered, and God addressed it tenderly. Sometimes the most spiritual thing we can do is rest, eat, and recover.

Devotional reflection:

God cares for the whole person. Your body's needs are not unspiritual; they are part of God's design and His healing.

The Whisper at Horeb: God in the Quiet

At Horeb, God reveals Himself not in wind, earthquake, or fire, but in a “low whisper”—a voice of thin silence. Elijah learns that God's presence is often found not in dramatic signs but in quiet moments of stillness.

Devotional reflection:

When life is loud with fear or disappointment, God often speaks most clearly in silence. Slow down enough to hear Him.

Truth and Recommissioning: You Are Not Alone

Elijah believed he was the only faithful one left. God corrected him—there were seven thousand others who had not bowed to Baal. Then God gave Elijah new assignments and a companion in Elisha.

Devotional reflection:

Discouragement distorts reality. God reminds us of truth, gives us meaningful work, and places people beside us so we do not walk alone.

Devotional Summary

1 Kings 19 teaches that God meets His people in exhaustion with compassion, not condemnation. He restores through rest, speaks through quietness, corrects gently, and recommissions faithfully. This chapter remains one of Scripture's most tender portraits of divine care for the discouraged.

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
Communion Assistants – Tim Eckard & Nicky Jarrett
Ushers – Chris Jarrett & Gary Leatherman
Offering Counters – Todd Childers & Alan Shull