

*May God give you the grace never to sell yourself short;
grace to risk something big for something good;*



*and grace to remember the world is now too dangerous for
anything but the truth and too small for anything but love.*

- William Sloane Coffin

**The Worship of God ✦ May 21, 2023 ✦ Ascension Sunday
High School Graduates' Baccalaureate**

THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

312 West Main Street ♦ Post Office Box 649 ♦ Ahoskie, North Carolina 27910
www.fbcahoskie.org ♦ (252) 332-4003 ♦ office@fbcahoskie.org

The First Baptist Church of Ahoskie is a Cooperative Baptist Fellowship congregation.

THE WORSHIP OF GOD

May 21, 2023 ✠ 11:00 AM

✠ *The Season of the Church Year: Ascension Sunday*

GREETING TO WORSHIPERS

Rev. Anita Thompson

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

PASTORAL SENTENCES

Rev. Thompson

We gather not to be blessed, **but to bless.**
We gather not to receive, **but to give.**
We gather to bless God,
and to give thanks and praise to God
for the life, ministry, death, resurrection,
and coming again of Jesus the Christ.
Now let us worship together with zeal. **Amen.**

PRELUDE

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES AND OPENING OF THE BIBLE

Mr. John Boyd & Mr. Colby Hauser, Acolytes

LITANY

Mr. Braydon Conboy

Chapters end, new ones begin –
More school or new work or something completely different.
Endings carry the seeds of new possibilities.
Endings are never the last word in God's eyes.
There is grace surprising us,
Resurrections freeing us,
Hope reviving us,
Life calling us,
Music lifting us.
Praise God for endings and beginnings.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Mr. Conboy

+HYMN OF PRAISE 319 *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty* LOBE DEN HERREN

✠ ✠ ✠

CHILDREN'S TIME & BLESSING

Rev. Thompson

People of God, what is our prayer for these children?

**Our prayer is that they grow up to be like Jesus—strong and brave,
full of grace and truth, and that we will help them.**

✠ ✠ ✠

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Proverbs 3:5-6

Dr. Claudia Morris

In Pew Bible, page 720 of Old Testament

This is the word of God for the people of God; **thanks be to God.**

PRESENTATION OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

Rev. Thompson

John Boyd, *Ridgecroft School*
Colby Hauser, *Lawrence Academy*
Leah Woodard, *Lawrence Academy*

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Thompson

+HYMN 509

Trust and Obey
Stanzas 1 & 3

TRUST AND OBEY

✠ ✠ ✠

+PRAYER FOR THE OFFERING

Miss Leah Woodard

OFFERTORY & +DOXOLOGY

OLD 100TH

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him, all creatures here below.

Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

✠ ✠ ✠

EPISTLE LESSON

Ephesians 2:1-10

Mr. Conboy

In Pew Bible, page 235 of New Testament

This is the word of God for the people of God; **thanks be to God.**

SERMON

By Grace We Serve

Mr. Conboy

MEDITATION

Greater Grace
Chairo

Pardo, Moffitt, and Cottrell

There is a song that calls to my soul. There is a Friend that won't let me go.

Dark is the stain that I cannot hide, but I see Your arms of love open wide

I come just as I am.

Refrain: Grace, grace, God's grace, grace that will pardon and cleanse within

Grace, grace, God's grace, grace that is greater than all my sin.

There is a hill where pardon was paid. There is a king who died in my place.
Now I am alive, I am redeemed. Out of the grave, forgiven and free.

I'll fix my eyes on the cross forever. I'll put my hope in the love of my Savior.
All my sin and all of my shame is gone. Your grace is greater. I come just as I am.



INVITATION

It is our tradition to offer a time of response near the end of worship. A response may take the shape of a profession of faith in Jesus Christ and desire to be baptized, a request for church membership, or the sharing of a prayer concern or praise which may be communicated with the congregation or safely kept between the sharer and minister. Please respond as you feel led during the Hymn of Response.

+HYMN OF RESPONSE 676 *Teach Me, O Lord, I Pray*

DIADEMATA

+BENEDICTION

Rev. Thompson

+CHIMES OF THE TRINITY

RECESSIONAL OF THE LIGHT & POSTLUDE

Please be seated for the postlude.

+Those who are able are invited to stand.

Today's altar flowers are given to the glory of God and in honor of our children and grandchildren by Nat and Lou Riddick.

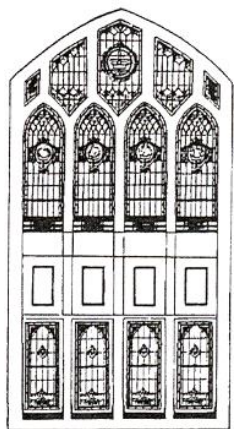
OUR MINISTRY TEAM

Rev. Anita D. Thompson
Associate Pastor

Rev. Dr. Paul R. Gilliam III
Pastor

Rev. Dr. Jesse J. Croom
Pastor Emeritus

Mrs. Leah Newsome
Music Associate/Pianist



A Window on the Weeks Ahead

May 21, 2023

First Baptist Church of Ahoskie, NC

✠ Worship Notes

♦ **The Christian Year** – *the church marks time differently than the secular world. We follow the Christian Year which begins with the Season of Advent four weeks prior to Christmas and ends with Christ the King Sunday on the Sunday prior to the beginning of Advent.*

Today we celebrate Ascension Sunday, the last Sunday in the Season of Easter. Before Christ ascended, He promised the disciples that He would not leave them “orphaned.” He said, “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever.” (Acts 1:6-11.) This Advocate is the Holy Spirit which birthed the church on the day of Pentecost. (Acts 2) Pentecost Sunday always follows Ascension Sunday. Next Sunday, May 28, we will celebrate the Day of Pentecost, also called the Birthday of the Church.

✠ Childcare During Worship

We give thanks for those caring for our young ones today in Extended Session while we worship:

Ages 1 & 2: Kari Pierce & Cheryl Slachta

Ages 3 & 4: Claire & Jordan Harrell

Kindergarten: Avery & Harriet Byrum

✠ 250th Anniversary of *Amazing Grace* Concert | May 21, 2023 | 3:00 PM

The year 2023 marks the 250th anniversary of the hymn, “Amazing Grace.” For two and a half centuries John Newton’s moving lyrics have stirred our hearts and given us a means to give thanks and praise to God for the grace we know through our Savior, Jesus the Christ.

This afternoon at 3:00 PM, our Music Ministry will present a concert in celebration of this anniversary. The Sanctuary Choir, the Vocal Ensemble, and Chairio will be singing. The congregation gets to sing, too. Following the concert, a strawberry dessert reception will be held in the fellowship hall.

✠ Prayer Prompt for The Gathering Place Ministries

Please pray for FBCA member, Pat Byrd, who is the founding and current Executive Director of Roanoke Chowan Christian Women’s Job Corps (RCCWJC). For 10+ years she has led RCCWJC to help struggling women reach their potential. RCCWJC provides a hand up to encourage and support women in need as they work to improve their life and their relationship with God.

✦ Vacation Bible School 2023 | July 24-27

4:45 PM-7:45 PM | Age 3—Completed Grade 5

Our Children's Ministry Council has begun recruiting leaders for this summer's Vacation Bible School. The leadership needs are:

- ♦ Small Group Leader – *in charge of a particular age group for the evening.*
- ♦ Bible Story Leader – *one for Age 3 – K, and one for Grades 1-5.*
- ♦ Recreation Leader – *one for Age 3 – K, and one for Grades 1-5.*
- ♦ Crafts/Activities Leader – *one for Age 3 – K, and one for Grades 1-5.*
- ♦ Meal Provider Teams – *one team for each evening.*
- ♦ Decorators

If you would like to volunteer, please speak with a Children's Ministry Council member, or contact Rev. Thompson. Council members are Elizabeth Davis, Anna Dawson, J.C. Doughtie, Claire Harrell, Suzanne Newbern, and Lee Taylor Rose.

✦ This Week's Calendar

Sunday, May 21 | *Ascension Sunday & Baccalaureate*

9:30 AM Sunday School

11:00 AM Worship

2:00 PM Chairo Rehearsal, *Sanctuary*

2:15 PM Sanctuary Choir, Vocal Ensemble & Chairo Rehearsal, *Sanctuary*

3:00 PM *Amazing Grace* Anniversary Concert & Reception

Monday, May 22

3:00 PM Church Staff Meeting

Wednesday, May 24

5:30 PM Children's Ministry Council Meeting, *Library*

7:00 PM Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

8:00 PM Vocal Ensemble Rehearsal

Friday, May 26

8:30 AM Christian Women's Job Corps, *The Gathering Place*

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