



GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Service of Worship — December 1, 2024

*“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that
Some have entertained angels without knowing it.” — Hebrews 13:2*

WELCOME TO WORSHIP! Thank you for worshipping with us today.

ELDER ON DUTY: Jake Schmidt

HEAD USHERS: Richard & Berdine Eby

HEARING ASSIST DEVICES ARE AVAILABLE. Please ask at the sound booth.

NURSERY CARE is available during worship, located in Room 22 in the east wing.

RECORD YOUR ATTENDANCE AT TODAY'S WORSHIP SERVICE WITH OUR VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE

PAD: Click this link: <https://bit.ly/GCPCattendance>, or scan the QR Code below.



CONTACTING STAFF: The office is open 8am to 4pm, M–F. To reach a staff member by e-mail:

- **Rev. Karen Wright (Interim Pastor):** karen.wright@gcpc.org
- **Emily Nelson Dixon (Dir. of Christian Education):** emily.dixon@gcpc.org
- **Rebecca Prater (Dir. of Music Ministries)** rebecca.prater@gcpc.org
- **Lindsay Callender (Youth Coordinator):** lindsaymichelle0130@gmail.com
- **Patrick Bell (Office Admin.):** patrick.bell@gcpc.org
- **Tara Hyder (Finance Admin.):** finance@gcpc.org
- **Jason Turner (Audio/Technical Dir.):** Please e-mail both darktrainfilms@gmail.com & gcpc.media@gmail.com. If you need a video or audio played in worship, please send the link to Jason on the Wednesday prior to Sunday's worship.

"Pray for one another" — James 5:15

We encourage you to remember the following in prayer:

All Grieving the Death of a Loved One

Surgeries/Hospitalizations/Illnesses

Cancer Treatment: Harold Farren, Katie Rickley, David Schesser

Aging Challenges: Lee Will

Military Service: David Zak, C.J. Bradley, Seth Lorimer, Mary E. Johnson II, Alanna Funk, Shannon Lorimer, Clara Frye, Eliana Wilson. **All veterans, deployed military, and reservists.**

Our Mission Co-Workers: Jeff and Christi Boyd in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Leslie Vogel, PC (USA) Regional Liaison for Guatemala and Mexico.

Peace and Relief Workers; Unemployed and Underemployed; Families Struggling with Separation and Divorce; Individuals Struggling with Depression; Those Contemplating Suicide and Those Left Behind.

Heartland Presbytery Partnership of Prayer: King City Presbyterian Church, King City, MO; Latour Presbyterian Church, Latour, MO; United Christian & Presbyterian Church, Lawson, MO

(If you have a prayer request you would like to include in the bulletin, please contact the church office at office@gcpc.org, or send to gcpc.prayers@gmail.com.)

SPOTLIGHT

THE SESSION HAS CALLED A MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION to be held after worship on Sunday, December 8, for the purpose of electing Deacons.

ADVENT — "ON THE WAY TO BETHLEHEM" — *"Where are you going?"* is the most common question upon hearing that someone is heading out of town. While the destination is perhaps the impetus for deciding to "go," it is often the journey itself that offers the most memorable moments — frustrating or delightful. **This Advent season, we will pay attention not just to the destination of Christmas,** but also to the places where events occurred that led to a starry night on which a child was born who would change the world. And we will ponder our own milestones — the progress and the potholes "on the way." Visit our website to learn more about the upcoming events and services at GCPC during Advent, as we journey **"On the Way to Bethlehem."** Visit gcpc.org/advent to get details and to download our Advent Devotion Booklet, written by members of the church.

FESTIVE POINSETTIAS WILL DECORATE THE SANCTUARY for the Christmas season. If you would like to be a part of the tradition of purchasing a poinsettia in memory or in honor of a loved one, you may do so by enclosing your donation in one of the poinsettia envelopes in the pews and place in the offering plate. Please be sure to neatly print your name and who the memorial/honor recognizes in block letters. You may also make a donation through the online giving portal on our website, or by sending your donation to the church office: GCPC, 11100 College Blvd., OPKS 66210, Attn: Patrick. *Deadline for names to be included in the bulletin insert is Friday, December 13.* Thank you!

THE RED BAG GIFTS ARE DUE TODAY! If you have a “complication” with a present, just let Sandy Adams know. Thank you for your support with this outreach. Your generosity will bring the love and joy of Christ to many children at Christmas. Thank you!

THE LONGEST NIGHT, SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE: Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church warmly invites you to our “**Longest Night**” service on **Sunday, December 22, at 7pm.** We recognize that the holiday season can be particularly challenging for those experiencing grief, loss, illness, or hardship. While many celebrate, some may feel a deeper sense of loneliness. **Join us for a time of music, scripture, silence, and prayers.** This service offers a space to connect with God in comforting ways, honoring loved ones and sharing hope, as we turn toward welcoming the Christ Child. Those we love are never far from us, even though at the holidays it can feel that way. Bring a photo or remembrance item, and experience God’s love and find solace in community.

THE DINNERS FOR 7 OR 8 will be finished in the month of November. A new session will begin in January and meet monthly to finish in April. If you would like to join and/or continue, please contact Kathy Williams by December 15. You may choose to dine in homes or dine out with a group. Groups will be notified by e-mail their new dinner group in late December. If you have questions, please contact Kathy Williams at kathykaskewilliams@gmail.com or 913-485-1776.

WORSHIP IS THE CENTRAL, SHARED EXPERIENCE where we praise God and are transformed and renewed to serve. In worship, Grace Covenant has welcomed 21 new members in the last year and a half. If you would like more information or if you are thinking about joining GCPC, come to “This is Grace” class on Sunday, January 12. Please contact Kathy Williams at kathykaskewilliams@gmail.com or call 913-485-1776 if you plan to attend.

2024 PER CAPITA GIVING: The Session of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church has committed to supporting the operations of our General Assembly, Synod of Mid-America, and Heartland Presbytery by contributing \$43.94 per member, the designated 2024 per capita amount. We invite each member to prayerfully consider contributing their \$43.94 to help offset this expense in GCPC’s 2024 budget. Your participation helps ensure our continued support for the work of our leaders and officers within The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Donations can be made via check payable to GCPC with “per capita” noted in the memo line, or online at gcpc.org/give (select “Per Capita” as the fund). Thank you for your generosity.

ADULT

ADVENT ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION — DECEMBER 1–DECEMBER 22 — 10:45AM ROOM 3

“On the Way to Bethlehem” – Adult Education Advent Study: Rev. Karen Wright will lead our Advent Adult Education class as we follow the long journey to Christmas through a series of lessons based on “On the Way to Bethlehem” by Rob Fuquay. The journey to Christmas begins in Rome with a decree issued from the seat of worldly power for a census, setting into motion events leading to the birth of the Savior of the world in a town that represents the very opposite of worldly power, Bethlehem. The series will provide insight into the geographical and historical significance of Rome, Jerusalem, Nazareth, and Bethlehem, along with the important characters through whom the Christmas drama unfolds.

THE AS THE PAGE TURNS BOOK GROUP will meet December 4 at 1:30pm in Room 3 at the church. The book selection is *The Art Thief* by Michael Finkel. Bring a wrapped book for the holiday book exchange. Please join the group for discussion and fellowship.

PAGE TURNERS’ ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SOUP SUPPER/BOOK EXCHANGE is Thursday, December 5, at 6:30pm at Cheryl Johnson’s home, 12840 Century St., Overland Park. Bring an appetizer, bread or dessert to share. Soup will be provided. For the gift exchange, please bring a book and bookmark in a gift bag. We will have a short discussion of *The Murder of Mr. Wickham* by Claudia Gray. This is a light-hearted murder mystery featuring characters from many Jane Austen novels. In case you want to discover some insight into Mr. Wickham’s character, read *Pride and Prejudice* (recognized as one of the best books of the last millennium). Or, you can watch one of the movies — two excellent choices — the 1995 A&E version with Colin Firth or the 2005 version. Please RSVP to Cheryl at agathatoo@gmail.com or on the GCPC Page Turners FB page. Everyone is welcome — even if you haven’t read the book!

CHILDREN

ATW, MUSIC & SUNDAY SCHOOL: All are welcome to join our Sunday school programming today. If you need further information, please check the Children's Bookcase outside the sanctuary for details.

MISSION

DECEMBER DONATION PARTNER AND COMMUNION OFFERING RECIPIENT: This month’s offering will support the Argentine Baby Closet at Argentine United Presbyterian Church. This ministry is in its 38th year of providing support to families in Kansas City, KS, and Grace Covenant has been one of its faithful partners for most of this time. The Baby Closet serves 45–50 families each month with diapers, wipes, clothing and other basics for infants and toddlers, including sleepers, blankets, burp cloths, books and other baby equipment (when available). This year the items most needed are:

- diapers — sizes 4 & 5

- shoes/boots — sizes 3-7
- formula — especially Similac (blue lid)
- toddler finger foods (Puffs, yogurt bites, etc.)
- new or gently used warm clothes — sizes 18 months to 2T

PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A HOLIDAY GIFT TO SUPPORT PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER

ASSISTANCE: Just a few weeks ago, Hurricanes Helene and Milton wreaked havoc on the Southeastern United States — clean up and recovery efforts are still ongoing. Since the storms passed, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has been in constant communication with mid council leadership in the impacted areas. Emergency grants have already been distributed to address the most urgent needs, and national response teams have been deployed to provide assistance to churches and mid-councils and to help coordinate the church’s response. This effort will require ongoing support, not just for the physical recovery but also for the emotional and spiritual healing of those impacted. In these difficult times, we are called to respond through generosity, action and prayer — standing in the “GAP” to uplift our neighbors and offer hope in their journey toward recovery. Please consider making a gift to PDA to help with these recovery efforts. Immediate donations can be made [online](#), by scanning the QR code above with your mobile device, calling (800)728-7228, ext. 5885, or mailing a check to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES CONTINUE AT RENEWED HOPE FOOD PANTRY: ReNewed Hope makes a significant impact for good in our community by helping solve the problem of food insecurity. Many GCPC members have already volunteered at ReNewed Hope, and food donations may always be left in the bin in the Weekday Entrance. The pantry has volunteer opportunities on Sunday afternoons, Tuesday mornings, and Friday evenings. Please check out their website for more information: <https://renewedhopefoodpantry.org/>

GENEROSITY

GENEROSITY FULFILLMENT 2024 UPDATE - WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS: In mid-November, the Generosity Team is excited to share our fulfillment numbers. Our team is humbled by the *unwavering* generosity and commitment of our members — 91.7% of submitted pledges and 85.4% of rollover pledges have been received. Wow! We convey our thanks for the members who pay all or most of their pledge at the beginning, middle, or quarter of the calendar year, but **we are appreciative of everyone who has contributed to Grace Covenant.** Here is our giving progress shown by numbers of pledges:

Submitted Pledges (114)	March 31st	June 17 th	Nov. 19th
0-25% fulfilled	76	37	10
26-50% fulfilled	20	56	2
51-75% fulfilled	1	4	5
76-100% fulfilled	17	17	97
\$599,214	\$214,344	\$293,452	\$549,214

Rollover Pledges (16)	March 31st	June 17 th	Nov. 19th
0-25% fulfilled	10	6	4
26-50% fulfilled	5	8	3
51-75% fulfilled	0	1	0
76-100% fulfilled	1	1	9
\$34,662	\$6,668	\$11,175	\$29,585

Four groupings are used to show giving progress and calendar relationship. They are 0-25%, 26-50%, 51-75%, 76-100%. Each pledge falls into one of these groups.

Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church
11100 College Blvd, OPKS 66210
gcpc.org

Upcoming Events and Services

A Christmas Exclamation!
Sunday, December 8th, 6pm

The Longest Night Service
Sunday, December 22, 7pm

Christmas Eve Worship Services

Tuesday, December 24th
Children & Family Service
5pm Worship

Traditional Service
7:45pm Prelude Music
8:00pm Worship

Church Office Closed - Christmas

Wednesday, December 25
Thursday, December 26

Office Closed - New Year's Day

Wednesday, January 1, 2025

VBS 2025 Registration Begins Online

Wednesday, January 1

Epiphany Star Sunday

Sunday, January 5, 9:30am
Reception for Rebecca Prater, 10:45am

GCPC 40th Anniversary Event Intergenerational Afternoon Tea Party

Sunday, January 12, 2-4pm

Annual Church Meeting
Sunday, January 26, 10:30am

Bingo & Lasagna Night!
Friday, January 31, 5:30-7:30pm

**GCPC 40th Anniversary Event
Intergenerational DIY Mini Golf**
Saturday, February 8, 7pm

Covenant Group Brunch Potluck
Sunday, February 23, 10:30am

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
Tuesday, March 4, 5:30-7:30pm

Lent Begins

Wednesday, March 5

GCPC 40th Anniversary Event

Craft Fair

Saturday, March 29

Trivia Night!

Saturday, April 5

Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 5, 10am

Holy Week

Palm Sunday, April 12, 9:30am
Maundy Thursday, April 17, 7:30pm
Good Friday, April 18, 7:30pm
Easter Sunday, April 20, 9:30am

Vacation Bible School

"Road Trip - On the Go with God!"
June 2 - June 6, 9am-Noon

GCPC 40th Anniversary Celebration Brunch Following

Sunday, June 22, 9:30am



GRACE COVENANT
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Full details on these events and services are shared in the midweek email announcements, bulletin, newsletter, and on Facebook and Instagram.

For an online church calendar, visit gcpc.org/calendar