



# GRACE NOTES

## Clerk's Corner

The Session held its regular business meeting on October 16. We were delighted to welcome the Rev. Karen Wright, who will serve as our Bridge Pastor starting on November 1, as our Moderator. We also truly appreciate the Rev. Stephen Wing for stepping in and moderating our meetings in August and September. His insight and calming presence were a blessing at a chaotic time in our congregation.

We were also delighted to welcome prospective new members to the meeting and get to know a little bit about them. Hopefully by now you have met Dixie, Cyndi, Laura, Eldonna, Madeline, Amanda, and Nick. If you haven't, please make a point of finding them, introducing yourself, and helping to weave them into the fabric of our congregation.

The largest portion of our evening was spent discussing our path forward. Several members of the congregation and members of the Session have expressed interest in bypassing the interim pastor period and proceeding directly to searching for a called and installed pastor. While both paths have advantages, the Session decided to continue our current path of pursuing an Interim Pastor. (A separate letter from Bill Turner about this process was included as a bulletin insert and sent to the Congregation via e-mail in late October. It is also included in this newsletter.) Our Ministry Discernment Profile was approved by the Commission on Ministry in October and has been uploaded to the PCUSA matching system, so our IPNC (Interim Pastor Nominating Committee) is probably already looking at candidates.

In other reports:

- The facilities team has received bids to update our fire protection system, our utility bills continue to climb, and Kirk Heer continues to try to optimize our HVAC system.
- Rebecca, Patrick, and Tara all appreciated their financial gifts.
- Thanksgiving Eve plans are coming together.
- Wor(k)ship participation has been slowly but steadily declining – if you have thoughts about why, please share them with Mikki Walker.
- FoodCycleKC is ending their composting service at the end of October (just as we were getting the hang of it!) but alternate options are being considered. Stay tuned for updates.
- The Nominating committee is starting to look for Deacons to begin service in January. Please consider prayerfully whether this might be the time for you to share in this important ministry.

If you have any questions about any of these items, please talk to any Session member! —Melanie Townsend, Clerk of Session



God gathers us in a welcoming community, with our curiosity and questions, to worship creatively, learn from God's word, share our gifts, and deepen our faith.

With grateful hearts and a spirit of adventure, we go to serve Christ in the world, sharing kindness with everyone, and working for justice rooted in God's love.

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Facebook and Zoom.

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# Interim Pastor Nominating Committee (IPNC) Update

*By Bill Turner*

In an effort to keep the Congregation informed, I wanted to provide an update on our progress as well as address some recent concerns/recommendations that were brought to the attention of the committee and Session.

The IPNC has completed the Ministry Discernment Profile (MDP) and it has been approved by the Committee on Ministry (COM) of the Presbytery. This is the first critical step of creating a document for potential candidates to review. It is constructed so as to identify our church, the community in which we live, and the strengths and job attributes we believe to be important for our candidates. The MDP will be posted on the Presbyterian web site within the next day or two. We fully expect to start receiving applications shortly thereafter.

One of the questions that has been posed to the IPNC and to Session was, *"Is it really necessary to go through the process of hiring an interim (or transitional) pastor, or could we/should we use the Bridge Pastor to carry us directly to the process of seeking a permanent pastor?"*

**I'd like to take a moment to address that question specifically.**

1. While there are those who may believe the Interim to Permanent Model is a requirement from COM, that is not entirely true. There are, in fact, churches within our Presbytery who have chosen to bypass the interim process and have moved directly to hiring a permanent Pastor.

COM does prefer that churches follow the Interim/Transition Process rather than move directly to

hiring a permanent Pastor, but have been known to grant exceptions.

If GCPC wanted to change the Interim process that has already been started, it would require taking our case to COM and having that revised process approved, then launching a Pastor Nominating Committee. At a minimum, this would set us back in the current process 2-3 months.

2. COM is also the entity that is responsible for posting job openings within the Presbytery and matching the attributes of the applicants to the attributes identified in the MDP provided by the church seeking candidates. There really isn't another widely viewed mechanism for posting the job, or having the final job and candidate matched and approved.
3. COM is also the governing body that ultimately must approve any recommended hire for GCPC, whether that is the Interim or Permanent Pastor.
4. There are some fundamental differences in the candidates that are seeking interim/transitional posts from candidates seeking a permanent post.
  - a. Interim candidates have typically had specific training in directing a church through a transition process. In the MDP submitted by GCPC, we specifically included that training as a requirement for candidates we would speak to.
  - b. The job applicant pool of Interim/Transitional ministers is larger. Many, if not most, of the candidates that make themselves available for this job are retired ministers who have gone through the transitional training and are seeking a relatively short-term posting to assist churches once there has been pastor turnover.

Hiring an experienced pastor as a permanent replacement comes about by matching our needs



## Welcome New Members!

Left to right:  
Laura Johnson, Cindy Monshizadeh, Dixie Selvidge, Eldonna Chesnut, Madeline Mahoney, Amanda and Nick Noren.

with a pastor looking to make a change in their current situation. COM has indicated that there are currently more openings in the Presbytery than candidates seeking new opportunities.

As the concerns were brought to Session this week, there was serious debate and discussion about what approach we (Session) believe is best for Grace Covenant. At the conclusion of our discussions, we believe the best course to meet the long-term needs of GCPC is to stay the course of utilizing a Bridge Pastor (*Karen Wright, beginning on Sunday, November 5th*) and proceeding with the Interim Pastor Review process that is already in motion.

I would like to assure GCPC that every effort will be made to move quickly into the process of posting a position for the permanent Pastor, once an Interim Pastor is in place. (*The last time GCPCP utilized an Interim Pastor, we waited nearly a year before forming a Pastor Nominating Committee, partly because GCPC had embarked on, but hadn't completed the process of defining its long-term Vision as a church.*)

Much of the work that Mitch & Sue Trigger completed while they were here helped GCPC evaluate and identify its current church Vision before they left. We truly don't feel like we will need to spend an inordinate amount of time revisiting that vision perspective to move forward.

I was selected to lead the IPNC process and plan on having my team address the church on a regular basis to let everyone know how we are progressing as we continue through this process. I would welcome any and all questions that any member has about our processes or our decisions. Contact me at [wturner9@gmail.com](mailto:wturner9@gmail.com), or (913) 515-5994.

## Your mission, if you chose to accept it - is to join Mission Team!

As you might guess from the name, Mission Team organizes most of the mission work we do at GCPC.\* That includes: directing most of our financial donations to external organizations, organizing the monthly donation partners and communion offering recipients, coordinating Minutes for Mission, and working with the coordinators for IHN, Uplift, and KCK Hot Lunch.

We also organize special events like Wor(k)ship Sunday, the East Hill Singers concert (in partnership with Music Team), and the Lenten Decluttering Challenge. We maintain connections to KAIROS and the EarthCare Team, for when our work intersects with theirs. And we do the stuff that all the ministry teams do, like making a budget and occasionally sending a motion to Session.

Mission Team meets the first Monday of each month, at 6:00pm, by Zoom. Our meetings typically take no more than an hour, and each team member might have up to 30 minutes of homework per month (usually less). The homework is typically something like sending emails or contacting an organization. Anyone interested in joining the team would be very welcome! If you want to try out one or two meetings and see what it's like before you make a decision, that's fine too!

Contact Mikki Walker if you're interested or have questions - [michala.walker@gmail.com](mailto:michala.walker@gmail.com).

*\*There is some mission work that Mission team isn't in charge of, such as Mission & Music Trips, or the donations collected during VBS.*

## Do you need assistance from the Tech Crew in Worship, Class, or an Event?

If you are wanting to project PowerPoint, a video, an audio recording, or anything else in Worship; or if you need assistance for a Sunday School class or Event related to media please get it to **Jason Turner**, Audio Visual Technician, **no later than Thursday by noon prior to the Sunday or 3 days prior to an event**. His email address is: [gcpc.media@gmail.com](mailto:gcpc.media@gmail.com). Thank you!

# MUSIC NOTES

## Music in Worship

**November 5th – All Saints' Sunday**  
Organ led worship. Anthem: "Ain't No Grave Can Hold My Body Down" A Traditional Spiritual arr. by Paul Caldwell & Sean Ivory sung by Chancel & Exaltation! Singers (CHEX) and Jubilation! Ringers will ring "For the Beauty of the Earth" arr. Brenda Austin

### November 12th

Organ led worship. Anthem: "Come, Thou Fount" arr. Eric Nelson sung by Chancel & Exaltation! Singers, Charter Ringers will ring "Very Soon I'll Fly Away" arr. Benjamin Tucker, and Chancel Brass will play "Zion" arr. Stan Pethel

### November 19th

Praise Team led worship.

### Wednesday, November 22nd – Thanksgiving Eve Service

**6:30pm** CHEX, Family, & Friends rehearse a simple Thanksgiving anthem in Choir Room/Rm 6. Come and join us!

**6:45pm** Gathering Music by Cal Sweeten, hammered dulcimer

**7:00pm** Thanksgiving Eve Service begins

### November 26th –

#### Christ the King Sunday

Organ led worship. Anthem: "Rejoice, the Lord Is King" arr. Dan Forrest with Donna Heer & Chris Lindsay, violins sung by Chancel & Exaltation! Singers

## LOOKING AHEAD TO SEASONAL MUSIC DURING ADVENT

Mark your calendars for Sunday, December 3rd at 6pm "A Christmas Exclamation!"

*a* **CHRISTMAS EXCLAMATION**

Hear our 4-year-olds through adults sing & ring Christmas favorites then join in with the congregation to sing Christmas carols & songs.

We'll also have as our special guest choir the "Winter Ensemble" from EncoreKC Chorus added to the program. Add in some fun videos & treats for the kids and this fun holiday program is a "don't miss event!"



## "Songs of the Season"

will be presented the following Sundays at 9:30am

**On December 3rd – the 1st Sunday of Advent**  
songs will be shared in worship by  
Praise Team  
Carrie DeVries, director

**On December 10th – the 2nd Sunday of Advent**  
songs will be shared in worship by  
GCPC Wind Ensemble, Pam Smith Kelly, director

**On December 17th – the 3rd Sunday of Advent**  
Advent & Christmas anthems will be shared in worship by  
Chancel & Exaltation! Singers & Instrumentalists  
Rebecca Prater, director

## "THANK YOU" FOR GIVING TO MUSIC

*Thank you to Celia & Mike Nicholas for the donation of a small table for our handbell ministry.*

*Thank you to Pam Smith Kelly for allowing our GCPC Wind Ensemble and Orchestra to use music from the publishing company in her father's name, Claude T. Smith Publications, Inc.*

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# Generosity Team Update For Good – Living in God’s Grace

Here is our pledging update as of October 3, 2023, which is 75% of the calendar year. There’s been consistent progress with 75% of Submitted pledges and 80% of Rollover pledges received! As we draw closer to the end of the year, we really value your consistent giving. As always, we greatly **appreciate your generosity and commitment** to Grace Covenant. Please provide feedback to our team: Dave Sutherland, Ryan Hussey, Bill Brown, Rick Randolph, and Jane Knoche.

Here is our giving progress shown by numbers of pledges:

Submitted Pledges (103)	April 12	May 16	June 19	August 15	September 19	October 3
0% fulfilled	32	24	22	15	14	14
1-25% fulfilled	33	12	10	4	5	3
26-50% fulfilled	29	52	50	18	10	8
51-75% fulfilled	0	3	8	44	49	38
76-100% fulfilled	7	11	13	22	25	40
\$527,258*	\$187,129	\$211,292	\$259,907	\$337,665	\$371,416	\$397,258

Rollover Pledges (27)	April 12	May 16	June 19	August 15	September 19	October 3
0% fulfilled	11	9	8	6	6	6
1-25% fulfilled	6	1	1	0	0	0
26-50% fulfilled	9	9	10	5	4	0
51-75% fulfilled	1	5	3	8	8	8
76-100% fulfilled	1	4	6	8	9	13
\$101,369	\$15,480	\$53,965	\$59,355	\$68,930	\$71,680	\$81,505

5 groupings are used to show giving progress and calendar relationship.

They are 0%, 1-25%, 26-50%, 51-75%, 76-100%. Each pledge falls into one of these groups.

\* We are very grateful for the feedback on pledge amounts.

## 2024 Pledge Drive

Our theme for the pledge drive is **What the Future Holds**. We are basing our campaign on this scripture from Jeremiah 29:11 *“I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.”* Pledge Sunday is November 5, 2023. You can see our progress by stopping by the Generosity Bulletin Board. Please turn in your pledge to Tara Hyder, Finance Administrator, or sign-in on Realm. Please join us in creating an amazing future in 2024!



## IHN starts again November 5

Our November Host week starts November 5-12. We are welcoming our second support church, Shawnee Mission Unitarian Universalist Church (SMUUCH) to this rotation. An orientation will be held from 4:00 – 4:45pm, on November 5th for our new volunteers and any of our current ones that wish to get an update. Please RSVP to Jane Knoche if you plan to attend. SMUUCH will cover Wednesdays including overnight and Saturday morning host & breakfast. Jane will be the lead Primary Coordinator on this rotation. Thank you in advance for supporting us with your hosting commitment and providing food and prayers this week!

# Children's Team



As the calendar turns to another page, we are excited for this season of thanksgiving. The Children's Team is counting our blessings this month. Our favorite thing to see is our children filling our hallways and classrooms each Sunday. Their sweet voices and laughter bring smiles to all of us. We couldn't offer our great programs without our volunteers and we give thanks for all of our volunteers for the various ways you help make our programs a success, too. "Heavenly Father, we thank you for blessing our church family with one another!"

## Trunk or Treat

We loved seeing all of our ghosts and goblins this year at our Trunk or Treat. We enjoyed lunch, games, and all the candy. Let's just say it was **love at first bite!** We want to be sure to let everyone know how much we appreciated all of the donations we received and the volunteers who worked to provide this event free to our families, friends, and neighbors. We had a **fangtastic** time.



SERVICE - MUSIC - ARTS - SPORTS - HANG-OUT

In October, our SMASH program continued its Children of the Bible studies for our children in Kindergarten through 5th grade. We talked about Timothy and how he shared the word of God with others. Despite being young and small, he had a lot to offer God's people. The children discussed that even the smallest things can make a big impact.

We continue our studies in November with discussions on what a difference the young boy with a lunch of five fish and 2 loaves of bread made for a crowd of Jesus' followers. **Join us November 12th from 4-6pm in Heartland Hall.**

RSVP via our GCPC Children's group Facebook event or email [gcpcchildren@gmail.com](mailto:gcpcchildren@gmail.com).

## Bible Workshop

Do you know how many books are in the Bible? If you answered 66, you are right!

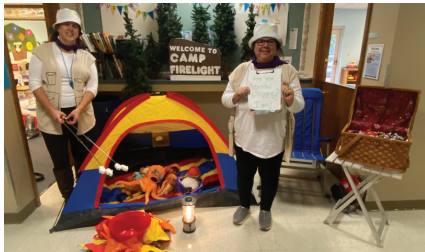
**On Sunday, November 12th, our 3rd grade children (we encourage a parent(s) to attend with them, too) are invited to a Bible Workshop.** At our workshop, we will learn some fun facts about the Bible along with how we can study the Bible so that we can become readers and doers of God's word. We will begin during the Sunday School hour and conclude around 12:30pm. A light lunch will be served. Following the workshop, our children will be presented with a Bible of their own in an upcoming worship service. We want to thank Melanie Townsend and Cheryl Johnson for leading our children through important learning opportunities. The Children's Team and our families are very grateful for your time and talents.

## Children's Events at a Glance

- Nov 5 ATW, Sunday School will be a full hour of Music
- Nov 12 ATW, Music & Sunday School, Bible Workshop, and SMASH from 4-6pm
- Nov 19 ATW, Music & Sunday School
- Nov 26 ATW and Advent Fair (in lieu of Sunday School)

If you have any questions or comments about our children's programs or pictures of our children's events, please e-mail our Children's Team at [gcpcchildren@gmail.com](mailto:gcpcchildren@gmail.com).





## Thank You Church Family!

Thank you to everyone who held my dad, Charlie Bogan, close with prayers during his health scare. He appreciated the cards and especially the prayer shawl from the amazing knitting group. Nelson Townsend is the best deacon! We are lucky to be a part of the GCPC family!  
—Julie Webb

## Page Turners

Page Turners will meet Thursday, November 2, 7pm at Johnnie Baker's house to discuss *Women Talking* by Miriam Toews. Johnnie's address is 8608 W. 152 Terr., Overland Park. (Carpooling suggested since it's on the end of a cul-de-sac!) Please RSVP to 913-219-3893 or [johnniebkr@gmail.com](mailto:johnniebkr@gmail.com). You can also use the Bookclubs app or Facebook to respond. (The movie adaptation is also good and available on Prime.) Hope to see you on November 2.

## Harold Frye Named Moderator of the Synod of MidAmerica for 2024

Grace Covenant is a member of the Heartland Presbytery and, as a connectional PC(USA) congregation, is a member of the Synod of MidAmerica. SoMA includes 6 Presbyteries in Kansas, Missouri, and South-Central Illinois with 355 member congregations.

At its October 14 Assembly meeting, Ruling Elder Harold Frye was elected Moderator of the Synod for 2024. He has participated in Heartland Presbytery, leading the Committee on Commissioned Pastors, and in the Synod leading the Finance Committee and the Governance Committee.



# GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**Inclusive. Family Oriented. Welcoming.**

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## CHURCH STAFF

- Director of Music Ministries**  
- Office hours: Monday-Wednesday, Friday  
**Rebecca Prater**, [rebecca.prater@gcpc.org](mailto:rebecca.prater@gcpc.org) ...ext. 13
- Church Administrator**  
- Office hours: Monday-Friday  
**Patrick Bell**, [patrick.bell@gcpc.org](mailto:patrick.bell@gcpc.org) ..... ext. 10
- Youth Coordinator** .....Lindsay Callender  
[lindsaymichelle0130@gmail.com](mailto:lindsaymichelle0130@gmail.com)
- Finance Administrator** .....Tara Hyder  
.....[finance@gcpc.org](mailto:finance@gcpc.org)
- Organist** ..... Linda Dover
- Audio/Visual Technician** ..... Jason Turner
- Contemporary Music Coord.** ..... Carrie DeVries
- Contemporary Music Drummer** .....Jill Endaya
- Child Care Coordinator** .....Carolyn Chaffin
- Wedding Coordinator** .....Kristy Shaw
- Funeral Coordinator** .....Mary Sue Thomas

## ELDERS

- |                 |                                    |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| Joy Circo       | Jaylee Soule                       |
| Barbara Douglas | Tom Stroud                         |
| Katie Hearn     | Melanie Townsend,<br>Session clerk |
| Jane Knoche     | Bill Turner                        |
| Angela Krug     | Michala Walker                     |
| Lara Schesser   | Mary Ann Weyforth                  |
| Jake Schmidt    |                                    |
| Kristy Shaw     |                                    |

## SUPPORT STAFF

- Deacon Moderator .....Anne Stroud
- Operating Committee ..... Angela Krug,  
Lara Schesser, Katie Hearn, Tom Stroud
- Newsletter Editor/Marketing ..... Kim Krueger
- Prayer Chain ..... Cheryl Johnson
- Website Administrators .....Kim Krueger,  
Patrick Bell, Christy Soule

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Instagram: @gcpc\_overlandpark

## MINISTRY UNITS

- Congregational Nurture Unit Moderators  
Care and Connections....Mary Ann Weyforth  
Worship and Music..... Kathy Bures,  
Katie Hearn
- Education Ministry Unit Moderators  
Adult .....Tom Stroud  
Children ..... Angela Krug  
Youth..... Lara Schesser
- Reach Out Ministry Unit Moderators  
Kairos ..... Rick Randolph  
Mission .....Mikki Walker  
Welcoming ..... Kathy Williams
- Supportive Ministry Unit Moderators  
Facility ..... Liz Chandler  
Generosity ..... David Sutherland  
Finance..... Beth Lillian  
Personnel ..... Kevin Mason

## Worship Schedule

**9:30am Worship**  
**In-Person, Facebook & Zoom**  
Visit [gcpc.org/online](http://gcpc.org/online) for links

## Upcoming Newsletter Article Deadlines

**December 2023 issue - Deadline, November 17**  
**January 2024 issue - Deadline, December 19**