



REAL FAITH | REAL STORIES | REAL GRACE

GRACE NOTES

Gratitude...thankfulness...appreciation...

These are more than just words. They describe an attitude, a way of looking at life that is all too rare in our world today.

The attitude I often see online and on television, however, is very different. Too many people look at the world today and feel slighted, feel that for some reason they're not getting everything they're entitled to, and they look for someone to blame. We see it in the divisions between people from different regions of the country, people in rural and urban areas, people from different ethnic backgrounds, sometimes even divisions between family members. Now I'll be the first to say that there really are some vast inequalities between certain segments of society and they stem from long-term inequality. These divisions are contrary to the kingdom of God which is supposed to be our priority, a society where *"The one who gathered more didn't have too much, and the one who gathered less didn't have too little."* (2 Cor. 8-15)

If all of us were to be more intentional about living in gratitude, something Jesus encouraged us to do, we might understand how blessed most of us have been in our lives and focus on those blessings. Living in gratitude is not just mentally taking inventory of our blessings, but also taking the time to express gratitude. Do we tell our "significant others" often enough how lucky we are to have them in our lives? Do we express appreciation of our friends in conversation with each other? Do we thank those that we know have been praying for us in difficult times? As writer William Arthur Ward shared, "God gave you a gift of 84,600 seconds today. Have you used one of them to say thank you?"

Thanks be to God from whom all blessings flow, and just as big a "thanks" to each and every one of you who allows your pastors, church staff, and many church members to follow God's guidance and allow us to do ministry for you and for each other.

Peace and thanks be with you all, Mitch Trigger



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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In-Person Worship and Online
Worship every Sunday on
Facebook Live and Zoom.
Visit gcpc.org/online for links!



Fellowship, Food & Worship!

Wednesday, November 23

Thanksgiving begins a month of real appreciation and fellowship for all of us at Grace Covenant. As has been the tradition at GCPC, we will begin by having a **Chili Supper on Thanksgiving Eve, November 23, at 5:30pm.** We ask all of us willing to share our chili-making skills with each other to go online to SignUpGenius at: <https://tinyurl.com/a55ehskj> or give us a call at the church office to let us know what you'll be bringing.

Following the chili supper in Heartland Hall, we'll **move to the Sanctuary at 6:45pm** for Gathering Music by our Dixieland Band and then share a **worship service at 7:00pm**, focused on our thanks and gratitude to God and one another.

Thanksgiving with the Triggers!

Thursday, November 24

Sue & Mitch would like to share a tradition of theirs with you on Thanksgiving Day. If you find yourself without any plans for your Thanksgiving meal, how about joining us that day in Heartland Hall? A few of you have already participated with us in the past in our home, but we wanted to open this up to anyone in the congregation, both individuals and couples.

Maybe you don't have any family in the area that you can celebrate with or it's just too far to drive to someone's home; maybe your kids and grandkids have to share holidays with in-laws and won't be joining you this Thanksgiving; for one of many possible reasons you may just find yourself alone at Thanksgiving.

Have we got a deal for you! We will provide the roast turkey, mashed potatoes, and gravy – you bring a favorite dish to share. If you'd like to join us, **either sign-up online at <https://tinyurl.com/3w4kjb2> or call Mitch or Sue at the office** to let us know what you'd like to bring. All of us should be with family on Thanksgiving – come join your church family!



A Song-filled Advent/Christmas!

You probably read this title and thought, “we always have a song-filled Advent/Christmas at Grace Covenant” and you'd be right. But this title describes our Advent sermon series **The Songs of Christmas – a look at the biblical songs in the story of Jesus' birth.**

A lot of Scripture passages are the words of songs sung by prophets, kings, messengers, and more, but we don't recognize them that way – they don't read or look like songs we know. That may be true, but they are songs just the same and there are songs that mark the important moments in the story of Jesus' birth found in the Gospel of Luke.

Exploring these biblical songs will only add to our musical emphasis during the Season of Advent.

- **1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT**
November 27
Mary's song (*Luke 1:46-55*)
- **2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT**
December 4
Zechariah's song (*Luke 1:67-79*)
- **3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT**
December 11
John the Baptist's song (*Luke 3:1-18*)
- **4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT**
December 18
The Angel's Song (*Luke 2:14*)
- **CHRISTMAS DAY**
December 25
Simeon's song (*Luke 2:28-32*)



Church Finance Discussion

Air Conditioner Status Report

The air conditioners that were stolen or drained or effectively destroyed in May were replaced in June for around \$160,000+. The insurance company paid \$60,000 initially. Mike Mattix, with help from our insurance contractor and insurance agent, convinced the insurance company to pay for the entire cost less our \$2,500 deductible. The check for the remainder of approximately \$98,781 was deposited in early October. In the final analysis, the church has 5 new air conditioners and the related heat exchangers with new compatible furnaces at the price of a couple of hot Sunday services and \$2,500.

Operating Budget

The month of September was a little disappointing. Revenue was \$14,700 below budget, primarily due to a lack of pledged and rollover pledge receipts. Pledged receipts still are ahead of budget for the year to date. Several members paid their pledges early in the year, which impacts the last few months negatively. Expenses were over budget by approximately \$4,000. This is due to the fact that there were three paydays in September, not the usual two. This happens twice a year when the biweekly payroll falls on the first day or two of the month. The net result was a \$21,186 deficit for the month. Compare that to a \$1,600 deficit projected in the budget for September.

For the year to date, to the first few days of October, *(after recording the receipt of the last insurance check)*, the church is approximately \$50,000 in excess of receipts over disbursements. There is a good chance that the church will operate at breakeven for the full year. A sizable deficit was projected in our initial budget.

Investments

One final note: after several straight years of impressive gains, our investment loss in our endowment and reserve funds is an impressive \$99,186 this year. The combined balance of all of our invested funds (excluding our operating cash account) is \$553,043.70.

Regards, James Byrd, Moderator, Finance Team

Clerk's Corner

Session met on October 17. We had no special business and heard all committee reports. We discussed better ways for people to make free-will offerings and ways to provide connection (*rides, texts, and phone calls*) for church members who may need a little assistance or support.

The BIG NEWS is that our insurance company has reimbursed us for ALL of the HVAC work this summer, with the exception of our deductible. Initially they had sent us a check for about 1/3 of the amount they should have paid. We are so grateful to MIKE MATTIX for all the work he did to hold the insurance company accountable and get our claim paid in full! THANK YOU MIKE for your commitment to the welfare of our congregation! *(Feel free to thank Mike personally if you see him or talk to him.)*

—Melanie Townsend, Clerk of Session

Worship Participation Opportunity

At Grace Covenant worship involves everyone. If you would like to participate by reading the Scripture lessons of the day, you can sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050b44a5a72aa64-gcpc>, or by calling the church office, 913-345-1256.



We Are All in This Together: A Year Exploring God's Creation

Join us November 13 for a Lunch and Learn about the how's and why's of home composting. Join Brandon Hearn as he shares information about how you can use your food scraps to help the environment.

This class will meet in Room 3. To sign up to attend log onto: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0A45A4A722A4FC1-were>

Grace Studies: For Kids

Pre-school 2-4 years:

Pre-school children will grow in grace and gratitude this year! They will gather to explore and respond to God's grace and be sent out to love and serve God by being:



- Rooted in the foundation of Presbyterian identity where God's grace and our gratitude are the heartbeat of our faith, life, and worship;
- Invited to discipleship that inspires them to learn and practice hospitality, generosity, and love; and
- Encouraged to reach beyond Sunday mornings and church walls to live their lives as an expression of God's grace.

When our children are at home, families can use these tools to explore God's grace and gratitude each day:

- Grace Sightings: the weekly Bible story with age-appropriate activities for your family to do at home.
- Audio Recordings: the weekly Bible story brought to life by endearing readings and sound effects.
- E-book: the quarter's colorful illustrations, Bible stories, and Grace Sightings in iBook and Kindle formats.

Find these tools at:

www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads.

K- 5/6th Grace Makers:

At Grace Covenant, our elementary grades enjoy a program that is unique to GCPC. We create our own lesson plans that encourage learning through a variety of learning modes: art, music, drama, science, cooking, kinesthetic learning and more.



During November, classes will take a look at how we experience God's joy in creation and then turn our focus to Advent and the story of Jesus' birth. We are excited to introduce our first computer lab into the workshop rotation!

There's Room for everyone in Sunday School!

Nursery: Room 22

Toddlers/Preschool 2-4yrs: Room 23

Kindergarten – 1st Grades: Room 25 (10:45am gathers here for Joy! Singers and will be escorted to their workshop.) *(Grace Makers Workshop Rotation classes move each week.)*

2nd—5th/6th Grades: Room 15 (10:45am gathers here for Celebration! Singers) *(Grace Makers Workshop Rotation classes move each week.)*

6th–8th Grades: Room 19b

High School: Room 19a

We're All in This Together: A Year of Exploring God's Creation Presents



A Sustainable Advent

An Advent Fair for All

Sunday, November 20
10:30am in Heartland Hall

- Drop off old light sets to be recycled
- Learn about alternative giving sources
- Make eco-friendly bird feeders, cookies, crafts
- Make an Advent wreath for use at home
- Enjoy refreshments and visit with friends

Grace Studies: Adult Study Opportunities

Follow Me: Seasons of the Church Year

November 6 and 13; Meets in Room 3; Leadership shared

Zoom in at: <https://tinyurl.com/mpjnzezs>

Did you know that Advent marks the beginning of the church year?

Ever wonder why we have a church year? For many Christians, our lives are ruled by a variety of calendars: the annual calendar that runs from January through December. Churches may plan activities and events around all these different calendars, but the most important calendar in the life of the church is the liturgical calendar.

The liturgical calendar highlights the seasons in the church year, seasons that revolve around the birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and promised return of Jesus Christ. The liturgical calendar shapes our lives as the people of God. Participants will learn about the development of the church year, reflect on what it means to Christians today, and discover how it shapes our lives together.



A Cain and Able Conversation with Tom Stroud

November 6

Zoom in at: <https://tinyurl.com/mvvv5b8t>

Want to feel better about your parenting skills? Come see how you can easily do better than Yahweh as Tom Stroud contemplates on the story of Cain and Abel.

Transgender 101: Learning the Language with Maggie Blankers

November 13

Zoom in at: <https://tinyurl.com/mvvv5b8t>

At GCPC we are committed to continuously growing its expression of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and a core facet of that commitment is creating a community that fully welcomes and respects our transgender and non-binary family. Starting with the practice of using inclusive language, we believe in making progress together toward a future where every person is respected, empowered, and always able to be who they truly are. This class will offer tips and resources to help participants to interact respectfully with transgender individuals.

A Sustainable Advent: An Intergenerational Advent Fair

November 20; Heartland Hall

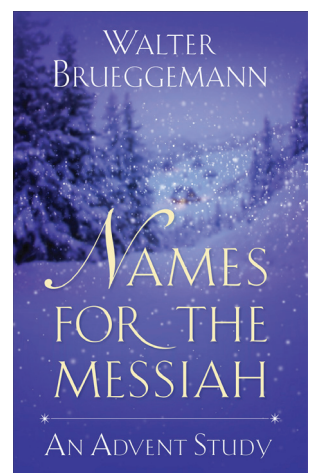
See details on page 4.

Names for Messiah by Walter Brueggemann

November 27 – December 18; Meets in Room 3

Zoom in at: <https://tinyurl.com/mvvv5b8t>

Isaiah 9:6 pronounces four titles for the coming Messiah: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. Brueggemann, one of our most admired Old Testament scholars, reconstructs the first-century Jewish expectations for a deliverer, then evaluates how Jesus did and did not fulfill them. Join Joel Ilten for this uplifting study.





YOUNG ADULTS & FAMILIES Progressive Dinner

Sunday, November 13
4pm-7:30pm

We'll start with appetizers at one member's home, move to main course at another, and finish up with dessert at another!



To sign up contact:

Emily Hussey at ekthussey@gmail.com

Find us on Facebook: GCPC Young Adults & Families



Craft Donations Needed!

The quilting group is expanding our outreach to include tactile quilts: small lap quilts with different items sewn on that memory care patients can fiddle with. If you have leftover sewing notions that fit the bill (zippers, tassels, patches, buttons, buckles, etc. that can be sewn onto fabric squares), we would love to repurpose them! Fabric donations are also always welcome - cotton, please, at least ½-yard increments.

These can be placed in the blue bin in the Weekday Entrance marked QUILTERS! Questions, please contact Donna Heer at taxdheer@gmail.com.



SMASH Sunday!

Service, Music, Art, Sports, Hangtime

Arise! Shine With Faith!

November 20, 4-6pm

In October, our Smash program met to discuss ways we can shine with Faith. Our children discussed Peter's lesson on the power of faith in Jesus. Peter walked on water! They played with their food again in order to act out the walking on water story. They even tried to help a paper clip float in water and they did it! Game time was a blast as they were pretending to staying on top of the water too. We welcome children of Kindergarten through 5th grade to join us for this fun and so much more. If you know someone who is interested in joining us, please invite them!

Our November SMASH will focus on another one of our VBS pathfinders, "Arise, Shine with Joy!" and will be held on November 20th from 4-6pm. We will also utilize some of our time together this month to practice the JOY our children will share at our Christmas Eve services. SMASH meets in Heartland Hall.

Please RSVP for your children to Christy Soule at christysoule@yahoo.com.

MUSIC NOTES

LOOKING AHEAD TO SEASONAL MUSIC DURING ADVENT

MUSIC IN WORSHIP

November 6th – All Saints' Sunday

Organ led worship. Joy! Singers (4s-1st graders) will sing "Give Me a Thankful Heart" arr. Tracey Craig McKibben, and "Ain't No Grave Can Hold My Body Down" A Traditional Spiritual arr. by Paul Caldwell and Sean Ivory will be sung by Chancel and Exaltation! Singers (CHEX).

November 13th

Praise Team led worship. Charter Ringers ring "Medley for Thanksgiving" arr. Sondra Tucker & Celebration! Chimes will ring "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come" by George Job Elvey.

November 20th

Christ the King Sunday

CHEX shares the anthem "Hallelujah, Amen" from Judas Maccabeus by G. F. Handel and Chancel Brass will play "HYMN TO JOY" arr. Douglas Smith

Wednesday, November 23rd

Thanksgiving Eve Service

6:20pm CHEX, Family, & Friends rehearse a simple Thanksgiving anthem in Choir Room/Rm 6 Come and join us!

6:45pm Gathering Music by Dixieland Band

7:00pm Thanksgiving Eve Service Begins

"THANK YOU"

Thank you to Linda Hoffman for the donation of a studio shaker (percussion instrument) in memory of Joe Hoffman.

Thank you to Pam & Jim Kelly for the donation of carpet squares for the handbell room.

Thank you for the donation of a white-board and a magnetic music staff in memory of Joe Hoffman for use in Celebration! Choir & Chimes' rehearsal room.

a CHRISTMAS EXCLAMATION

"A Christmas Exclamation!"

Mark your calendars for Sunday, December 4th at 6pm

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 some fun videos & treats for the kids. This fun holiday program is a "don't miss event!"



"Songs of the Season"

Presented each Sunday of Advent at 9:30am

November 27th – the 1st Sunday of Advent

Songs will be shared in worship by Chancel & Exaltation! Singers Rebecca Prater, director & Karen Kesler, soprano soloist

December 4th – the 2nd Sunday of Advent

Songs will be shared in worship by GCPC Orchestra Pam Smith Kelly, director

December 11th – the 3rd Sunday of Advent

Songs will be shared in worship by Praise Team Carrie DeVries, director

December 18th – the 4th Sunday of Advent

Songs will be shared in worship by Chancel & Exaltation! Singers & Instrumentalists Rebecca Prater, director

December 24th – Christmas Eve Music

5:00pm Service Music will be shared by

Joy! Singers (4s – 1st graders)

Celebration! Choir (2nd – 5th graders)

& Christopher Callender, guitar will lead "Silent Night"

8:00pm Service Music will be shared by

Chancel & Exaltation! Singers and Instrumentalists

December 25th – Christmas Day

Organ Led with

Kate, Sue, Charlie, & Mitch Trigger, quartet

Youth Page

Fall Fun and Fellowship!

We have continued into fall with some fun and exciting events and have a lot more to come. For Work-shop Sunday, the youth participated in stream cleaning. Though cold and wet, we were able to clean up trash, laugh, and explore together. We had a lot of fun finding interesting items like tires, pipes, and chairs.

We also went off-campus to Heartland for a fun fall adventure. We enjoyed throwing axes, shooting arrows, climbing a rock wall, riding horses, taking a hayride, and enjoying hot dogs and s'mores around a cozy fire. We have continued with Reconnect on Sunday mornings, and they have been great! Each Reconnect we have been able to enjoy playing games, amazing lunches, and diving deep into Old Testament stories.

Trunk or Treat

As a part of our annual Trunk or Treat, the youth participated by building a haunted maze. The haunted maze was a spooky treat for families to walk through in addition to the abandoned castle décor that dressed the youth hallway.

Coming Up

Later this fall the youth group will continue with more Reconnect Sundays and an overnight Homeless Night event as we have done in the past. Reconnect will continue to be from 10:45am to 12:45pm on Sunday mornings, where we will play new games, learn more about one another, eat lunch, and dive into the Bible. Homeless Night will take place November 19 – 20; the youth will be spending the night in cardboard boxes. There is still time for students to RSVP.



Work-Ship Sunday



Fall Fun Adventure





Heart of America CROP Walk 2022

Grace Covenant's CROP Walk tradition continued on Saturday, October 8 at Central United Methodist Church near the University of Missouri Kansas City campus. The CROP Walk returned to a community-gathering event after two years of individual church walks due to COVID-19.



Our walkers included Christine, Ed, and Matt Caseres, Jane Knoche, Morgan Krug, Ronda and Miles McDonald, and Karen and Dave Pack, along with the McDonald dogs Hank and Stormy. *(We are sorry that we missed getting the Caseres family in the picture.)*

We thank the congregation and others for approximately \$3,000 in donations to the team. Seventy-five percent of the funds support the ecumenical work of Church World Service. The other 25% stays in Kansas City to support the Community Assistance Council of Hickman Mills, KC Community Gardens, Lazarus Ministries, Metropolitan Lutheran Ministry, and the Seton Center.







GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Inclusive. Family Oriented. Welcoming.

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Follow us on Social Media!

Facebook: facebook.com/GraceCovenantPresbyterian

Twitter: @GraceCovPres

Instagram: @gcpc_overlandpark

CELEBRATING GOD'S ALL ENCOMPASSING LOVE!

CHURCH STAFF

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Organist Linda Dover

Contemporary Music Coord. Carrie DeVries

Contemporary Music Drummer.....Daniel Cole

Child Care Coordinator.....Carolyn Chaffin

Wedding Coordinator.....Lara Schesser

Funeral CoordinatorMary Sue Thomas

ELDERS

Jim Byrd	Angela Krug
Ric Cummings	Jake Schmidt
Miles Dalton (youth)	Terri Monrad
Andrew Frye	Joy Circo
Katie Hearn	Tom Stroud
Melanie Townsend	Lara Schesser
Jane Knoche	Bill Turner

SUPPORT STAFF

Deacon ModeratorMeredith Watson
Operating Committee..... Terri Monrad,
Ric Cummings, Katie Hearn, Angela Krug
Newsletter Editor/Marketing..... Kim Krueger
Prayer Chain Cheryl Johnson
Website Administrators Kim Krueger,
Patrick Bell

MINISTRY UNITS

Congregational Nurture Unit Moderators
Connections and Care.....Jake Schmidt
Worship and Music..... Kathy Bures,
Katie Hearn

Education Ministry Unit Moderators
Adult Tom Stroud
Children Erin Frye, Angela Krug
Youth..... Bill Turner

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..... Jim Byrd
Personnel Kevin Mason

Worship Schedule

9:30am Worship
In-Person, Facebook & Zoom
Visit gcpc.org/online for links

Upcoming Newsletter Article Deadlines

December 2022 issue - Deadline, November 15
January 2023 issue - Deadline, December 20