



GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*To all who are spiritually weary and seek rest;
to all who mourn and long for comfort;
to all who struggle and desire victory;
to all who sin and need a Savior;
to all who are strangers and want fellowship;
to all who hunger and thirst after righteousness;
and to all who will come,
this church opens wide her doors
and offers welcome
in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Church Staff & Officers

Brad Wright
Lead Pastor

Kyle Bobos
Associate Pastor

Jaime Jimenez
Assistant Pastor

Caleb McDuffee
Student Ministries

Elders

*Brent Allmon
Dan Brink
Jon Green
Rob McIntosh
Mark Moore
Andy Yung*

Deacons

*Matt Bradshaw
Mark Hill
Scott Johnston
Mike Ryan
Joe Tison
Sunny Yung*

Grace Church is affiliated with the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA).

Reflections

"Nothing is so clearly modern, so clearly Western, as is sloth. Despite our fast-moving, success-worshipping, ulcer-ridden society, we invest our energies and talents most often in what is trivial. Despite our frantic post, our eyes are seldom focused on what is actually good."

Jeff Cook, *Seven: The Deadly Sins and The Beatitudes*

"In the world it is called Tolerance, but in hell it is called Despair...It is the sin that believes in nothing, cares for nothing, seeks to know nothing, interferes with nothing, enjoys nothing, hates nothing, finds purpose in nothing, lives for nothing, and remains alive because there is nothing for which it will die."

Dorothy Sayers, Essay entitled "*The Other Six Deadly Sins*"

"Most of us want to be safe. We want to find a cocoon, a spiritually, psychologically, economically, and physically gated community in which to live without danger and disturbance. The care-free life, a life acedia, is our cultural ideal."

R.R. Reno, "*Fighting the Noonday Devil*"

"What is it like, this failure in the art of life? It is the failure which manifests itself in a loss of interest in really important things...There is nothing dramatic about it, and thus it works with a dreadful advantage; it creeps up on us, and once it has us in its grip, it is hard for us to recognize what ails us...But if...your feelings and sensibilities are withering, if your relationships with people near to you are becoming more and more superficial, if you are losing touch even with yourself, it is Acedia which has claimed you for its own."

Robertson Davis, "*The Deadliest of Sins*"

+ ADVENT + CHRISTMAS + EPIPHANY + LENT + EASTER + PENTECOST +

LENT SEASON

Ash Wednesday begins the journey of Lent. Its theme is repentance and renewal. Ashes are placed on the forehead as a sign of repentance, remembering that "from dust you came and to dust you shall return." Beginning with Ash Wednesday the call that prevails throughout the Lenten journey is to "create and make in us new and contrite hearts." While it is God who creates that new heart in us through grace, we are called on to receive God's grace in repentance, a turning from our sin, and in faith, a turning toward God. We are assisted in this journey of turning through fasting, prayer, and giving—external disciplines that order and organize the internal experience of our continuing conversion. We walk with Christ toward Good Friday and Easter as we contemplate the sacrifice he will make.

Grace Presbyterian Church

The Lord's Day, March 17, 2024

10:30 am

Prelude

Words of Welcome

Preparation for Worship¹

Praise

Call to Worship

Revelation 19:5b,6b,7a

Minister: Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, both great and small!

People: *Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory!*

¹ As a courtesy, please program all communication devices to silent mode. Thank you!

Song of Praise

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

Frederick Hedge and Martin Luther

A mighty fortress is our God
A bulwark never failing
Our helper He amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe
His craft and pow'r are great
And armed with cruel hate
On earth is not his equal

Did we in our own strength confide
Our striving would be losing
Were not the right Man on our side
The Man of God's own choosing
Dost ask who that may be
Christ Jesus it is He
Lord Sabaoth His name
From age to age the same
And He must win the battle

That word above all earthly pow'rs
No thanks to them abideth
The Spirit and the gifts are ours
Thru Him who with us sideth
Let goods and kindred go
This mortal life also
The body they may kill
God's truth abideth still
His kingdom is forever

Prayer of Adoration

Song of Adoration

Abide With Me

Henry Francis Lyte and Justin Smith

Abide with me fast falls the eventide
The darkness deepens Lord with me abide
When other helpers fail and comforts flee
Help of the helpless abide with me

Thou on my head in early youth didst smile
And though rebellious and perverse meanwhile
Thou hast not left me though I oft left Thee
On to the close Lord abide with me

I need Thy presence every passing hour
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be
Through cloud and sunshine abide with me

I fear no foe with Thee at hand to bless
Ills have no weight tears lose their bitterness
Where is thy sting death where grave thy victory
I triumph still abide with me

Renewal

Call to Renewal

Hebrews 6:12

We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.

Confession of Sin

*Minister
& People:*

Heavenly Father, our thoughts and motives cannot be hidden from your sight. Our self-pity and pride, our cowardice and sloth, our anger and envy are exposed to your eyes and ours. Forgive us, O Lord, and cover us in Christ. Let us hear your voice saying, "His blood is our peace, his death is our freedom, his Spirit our power, his smiting our safety." Let our hearts know that in your service is perfect freedom. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Private Confession and Reflection

Words of Encouragement

Titus 3:4-7

But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

Song of Thanksgiving

King Of Kings

Brooke Ligertwood, Jason Ingram, and Scott Ligertwood

In the darkness we were waiting
Without hope without light
Till from Heaven You came running
There was mercy in Your eyes
To fulfill the law and prophets
To a virgin came the Word
From a throne of endless glory
To a cradle in the dirt

To reveal the kingdom coming
And to reconcile the lost
To redeem the whole creation
You did not despise the cross
For even in Your suffering
You saw to the other side
Knowing this was our salvation
Jesus for our sake You died

Chorus:

Praise the Father, Praise the Son
Praise the Spirit three in one
God of Glory, Majesty
Praise forever to the King of kings

And the morning that You rose
All of heaven held its breath
Till that stone was moved for good
For the Lamb had conquered death
And the dead rose from their tombs
And the angels stood in awe
For the souls of all who'd come
To the Father are restored

And the Church of Christ was born
Then the Spirit lit the flame
Now this Gospel truth of old
Shall not kneel shall not faint
By His blood and in His Name
In His freedom I am free
For the love of Jesus Christ
Who has resurrected me (chorus)

The Prayers of the People (concluded with the Lord's prayer)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen!

The Peace of God

Minister: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you!

*If parents prefer, children 4 years old – 2nd grade
are invited to attend Children's Church in the Education Building at this time.*

Doxology

Thomas Ken & Bob Kauflin

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
In heaven above and earth below
Praise God the Father and the Son
Praise God the Spirit, three-in-one. Amen.

Announcements

_____ *Commitment* _____

The Offering

The offering is a way for members and friends of Grace Church to support the church's mission and ministry. If you are our guest today, please feel under no compulsion to give.

“For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. 15 To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. 16 He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. 17 So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. 18 But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. 19 Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. 20 And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.’ 21 His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ 22 And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.’ 23 His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ 24 He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, 25 so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.’ 26 But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? 27 Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. 28 So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. 29 For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. 30 And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Minister: This is the Word of the LORD.

People: Thanks be to God!

Sloth
THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS

Communion

Guidelines for Reception of Communion

Communion is the family meal for Christians. We welcome all committed followers of Jesus Christ to partake of this sacrament: those who are baptized members of a congregation which proclaims the gospel, who are at peace with God and with their neighbor, and who seek strength to live more faithfully for Christ. If you are not a Christian, or if you are not prepared to share in this meal, we encourage you to spend this time in prayer using the prayers that follow as guidelines. We hope that this time is helpful as you consider your relationship with Jesus Christ, and with his people, the church.

The Great Thanksgiving

Minister: Therefore, lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord!

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

People: It is right to give him thanks and praise!

Minister: Together we proclaim the mystery of faith.

All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again!

Song of Communion

It is Finished

Jonathan Evans and Benjamin Francis

Hark, the voice of love and mercy,
Sounds aloud from Calvary!
See, it rends the rocks asunder,
Shakes the earth and veils the sky!
"It is finished, It is finished,"
Hear the dying Savior cry.
"It is finished, It is finished,"
Hear the dying Savior cry.

"It is finished," O what pleasure,
Do these charming words afford.
Heavenly blessings, without measure,
Flow to us from Christ the Lord.
"It is finished, it is finished,"
Saints the dying words record.
"It is finished, it is finished,"
Saints the dying words record.

Finished all the types and shadows,
Of the ceremonial law;
Finished all that God had promised;
Death and hell no more shall awe.
"It is finished, it is finished,"
Saints from hence your comfort draw.
"It is finished, it is finished,"
Saints from hence your comfort draw.

Prayer of Consecration and the Words of Institution

Prayer for those not communing:

Prayer for Covenant Children (Not Yet Confirmed)

Lord Jesus, thank you for placing me inside your family, the church. Help me more and more to know you, to love you, and to follow you as your faithful disciple. Amen.

Prayer for Those Searching for Truth

Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth and the life. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever before believed, but, through you, I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared to hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as my Savior. Amen.

Prayer for Those Struggling with Sin

Lord Jesus, grant that I may see in you the fulfillment of all my needs, and may turn from every false satisfaction to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely, and run with perseverance the race set before me, looking only to you, the author and finisher of my faith. Amen.

Prayer of Commitment

Lord Jesus, you have called us to follow you in baptism and in a life of committed discipleship in your church. Grant that I may take the necessary steps to be one with your people, and live in the fullness of your Spirit. Amen.

Distribution of the Bread and the Cup

Once the stations are ready, please come forward, row by row, to receive the elements. Once everyone has returned to their seat, we will stand together and sing the final verse from our Song of Commitment.

Song of Commitment

It is Finished

Jonathan Evans and Benjamin Francis

Tune your harps anew, ye seraphs;
Join to sing the pleasing theme;
Saints on earth and all in heaven,
Join to praise Immanuel's name.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Glory to the bleeding lamb!
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Glory to the bleeding lamb!

Benediction²

Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Dismissal

Minister: Now, let us go forth to serve this community and the world as those who love our Lord Jesus Christ.

All: Thanks be to God!

The pastoral staff and other church leaders are available following the service to pray with you or to answer your questions about the Christian faith or Grace Church

² The benediction is much more than a wish or even a prayer. It is a renewed ordination of the people of God to their service to each other, to their community and the world. God declares his own favor toward his people.

Worship Music

Fang Daniels, cello
Zee Johnson, drums
Rae Moses, piano
Jennifer Reddick, flute
Stephanie Taylor, vocalist
Tim Taylor, vocalist & guitar

_____ Welcome, Guests! _____

Welcome to Grace Presbyterian Church! If you would like us to keep you in the loop with what's going on at GPC, *please take a moment to fill out the visitor information form by using the QR code.* We would be happy to meet you!



Ways to Connect at Grace where you can explore, engage, and get involved throughout the week.



- **Church Center App** (GPC Woodlands), use this QR code for a quick link to the app.
- **Our church website**, <https://www.gracewoodlands.org/>

_____ Announcements _____

Our Grace Guest wifi password is *GraceGuest*.

Stewardship Update: Grace thanks you so much for your generous gifts and offerings to our Savior for 2024.

General Fund Giving for February: \$65,563

\$198,588: Jan. - Feb 2024 General Fund Budget

\$121,380: Jan. - Feb 2024 Actual General Fund Income

(\$77,208):2024 Variance

*2024 GF Budget \$1,191,526

Holy Week Schedule:

- March 29th: Good Friday Service at 6 pm.
- March 30th: GraceLife Easter Egg Hunt and Brunch from 10 am-12 pm at Grace.
- March 31st: Easter Worship Services 9 am & 10:30 am.

Children's Ministries:

- **Parents of Infants-Three-Yr Olds:** Our nursery classes (ages 8 weeks thru 3 years) provide a warm, nurturing, and well-supervised environment. Our Staff welcomes the opportunity to love your child! When using the nursery, please check-in and label all items (bags, cups, etc.) with your child's name. Contact our Families Pastor, Kyle Bobos, at kyle@gpcwoodlands.org if you have any questions about the nursery.
- **Children's Church is for children ages 4 through 2nd grade.** During the passing of the peace, the children line up with their leader in the back of the sanctuary to exit worship. During the song of communion, children will rejoin their families to observe communion with the rest of the church body. We will gather in room 108 in the Education Building to sing songs, pray, and hear a children's sermon.

Banners Explained: The change of colors for Lent and the following Sundays helps communicate the movement of sacred time as well as our journeys. The color purple is a visual reminder of our need for repentance and self-examination.

On the banner to the right is an acanthus. It is the leaf that you see all over classic Greek and Roman architecture. It is a thorny plant, and a few have speculated that it may have been the source of the crown of thorns. Within Christianity, the thorns are a symbol of pain, and of sin and its punishment. It was regarded in ancient times by pagans as a symbol of death and rebirth.

On the other is a thistle. The thistle is a symbol of temporal sorrow and the curse of sin from the story of the Fall. Because the thistle is a thorny bush, it also is often portrayed as the source of Christ's crown of thorns. Because thistles flourish to crowd out useful crops, they have also been used to represent the "tares" or weeds written of in Matthew 13.