

GraceNotes

A Monthly Newsletter of Grace Christian Church

Grace Christian Church
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GROWING IN GRACE “Weathering the Weather”

In the annals of old north country lore, March is counted as the most dangerous month. Ice adventure is not advised. A northern sage warned, “March is cold enough for ice to pretend, yet warm enough for ice to be thinned.” In other words, what looks and feels seductively solid may, in fact, be precariously weak and flimsy. Of course, the reason is obvious. March is unpredictable. Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “Life is like March weather, savage and severe in one hour.”

A few years of living, even a ‘normal life,’ is enough to convince most people that life can “turn on a dime.” What seems sure and certain in one moment can in the next reverse course or evaporate from the radar screen altogether. Descriptors for the same could be ‘mercurial,’ ‘fickle,’ ‘erratic,’ ‘capricious,’ ‘volatile,’ ‘vacillating,’ or ‘fluctuating.’ Life has been depicted in all those terms. They all imply an inherent penchant for unexpected and rapid change. It would be a rare occurrence for one to proceed through life and not be acquainted with such numerous times. O, but what to do and find peace; how to live and keep sane amid the ebbs and flows of life that change like March weather?

The Prophet Isaiah tells us the answer has to do with tethering “the mind” to Him who is a rock-solid immovable stalwart. Here are his words in Isaiah 26:3-4:

“Thou will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee. Trust in the Lord forever, for in Him we have an everlasting rock.”

In the Hebrew text, “perfect peace” appears as “shalom, shalom.” The two-fold repetition is a literary device for emphasizing that God’s peace is extraordinarily secure, dependable, and steadfast. To be sure that’s what we need inwardly to keep our minds, hearts, and spirits anchored and moored amid the outward tumults and tempests of life in the world.

As we continue GROWING IN GRACE together, let us take good care to “stay our minds” on Jesus. He is the only One who affords the blessed steady state to “weather the weather.” March will do what March will do – “coming in like a lion, going out like a lamb” (or visa versa). Who knows? But what we can know (and experience) is the “shalom, shalom” of Him who doesn’t change like the weather. Indeed, “*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever*” (Hebrews 13:8).

Marching On,
Ed

ELDERS MEETING
March 10th
Tuesday—6 pm
[American Way Campus]



LADIES CIRCLES....

Dorcas Circle Lunch
March 10th
Tuesday – 10:30 am
[Lunch afterward at Mad Greek]



Adelphai Circle Meeting
March 12th
Thursday - 6 pm

[All ladies are invited to participate in either or both circles.]

BUTTERBEAN AUCTION



March 17th
Tuesday – 1 pm

[Everyone invited!]



[For more information about the “Butterbean Auction” and/or to donate items, you may contact “Butterbean Auctioneer” Lisa Darnell at (423)782-0963]

MISSIONS UPDATE

The month of February concluded with an update / report from Candace Bennett about the ministry of Agape Women’s Services. As in previous years, Grace Christian Church once again participated in the “Sanctity of Life” emphasis from Sunday, January 18th to Sunday, February 22nd. The month-long participation resulted in collecting 31 \$-filled plastic baby bottles and an SUV-load of baby clothes, blankets, shoes, and care products. GCC was blessed to present these gifts to Candace / AWS at the evening service on February 22nd.

For the month of March, donations of pre-stuffed plastic Easter eggs and or candy and trinket items to make the same are being received. The eggs will be used at our Easter “Egg-Stravaganza” event on Saturday, April 4th. A missions and outreach component is included in the event.

The regular missions program at GCC continues with our current support of 14 missions (5 monthly and 9 rotating) and 3 local missions supported via donated items. The status of the 3 local missions in February is reported as follows:

- Kay Cook delivered 317 individual snack items to the Ballad-HV “Hospitality Snack Cart”;
- Jeff Arrington reports that the “Bars of Soap” inventory for the Sullivan County Jail Ministry is 321 bars – 879 to go as we press on to 1200+; and
- Robert Thompson reports that containers of wipes are being held in reserve, pending delivery to Andrew Johnson School.

For the times ahead, let us be sure to remain always missions-minded. Of course, missions begin at the church door and extend to “the uttermost parts” (Acts 1:8). To be sure, Jesus commissioned us all as missionaries in “The Great Commission”: “Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations...” (Mt. 28:19-20).

MISSIONS QUOTE

“So many things have gone wrong in our world today that cannot change by our complaint, but only by stepping into our God-ordained responsibility”.

[by Benjamin Suulola – from Fresh Fire, 2026]



GEMS OF WISDOM FROM OUR FOREBEARS

“Joy is not so much the absence of sorrow and sadness as it is an awareness of God’s abiding presence with us at every moment. Sadness may overtake us in times of suffering and rejection. We may even indulge in self-pity. But if we turn our focus on Jesus, recalling His powerful presence, the clouds of sadness can be lifted, and we will experience the joy which no one can take from us”.

[by David E. Rosage, 1913-2009;
In Abide in Me, 1985, p. 142]

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

As spring arrives this month, signs of new life are spread abroad on the canvas of God’s creation. Christian education in the church is always a centerpiece of nurturing the spiritual life within. Children and youth C. E. continue under the leadership of Adam McCloud. Adam has the oversight of children / youth Sunday School (Sun. – 10 am), Children’s Church (Sun. – 11 am), and Grace Cadets (Sun. / Wed. – 6 pm). An upcoming highlight on the children / youth calendar is the Easter Egg-Stravaganza on Saturday, April 4th. Be sure to check out the “Grace Cadets News” below for more details.

Adult C.E. is built into the Sun. AM (11 am) and Sun. PM (6 pm) worship services. In addition, S.A.L.T. Bible Studies are held each Wednesday at 6 pm. The current study is on The Book of Acts. Adult Sunday School meets in the fellowship hall each Lord’s Day at 10 am. Henry Funkhouser and Nick Bush are teaching the adult class. The spring curriculum is from the Standard Lesson (Int. SS Lessons Quarterly. The topic is “Social Teachings of The Bible”. The new quarterly begins on March 8th, so it’s a good time to join the adult class.

To be sure, one of the best sources of C. E. is personal Bible study. Everyone is encouraged to engage with God’s Word on a constant basis. The Bible says, “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness, so that the child of God may be adequate and equipped for every good work” (II Tim. 3:16-17).



GRACE CADETS NEWS

As we move into March, there is a growing sense of anticipation as we look ahead to the Easter season and the meaningful activities that come with it. This is such a special time in the life of the church—a season filled with hope, renewal, and the powerful reminder of what Jesus has done for us. Our children and youth are already beginning to prepare their hearts as we talk about the significance of Easter and what it means for our faith today.

The Grace Cadets are continuing our conversations about how to deepen and live out our faith as disciples in today’s world. We’re discussing what it means to follow Jesus not just in church, but in our everyday lives—at school, at home, and with friends. It has been encouraging to see our kids think seriously about how their faith shapes their choices, attitudes, and relationships.

One especially joyful moment this month has been Audrey’s decision to be baptized. What a beautiful step of faith! The Grace Cadets are so proud of her, and it has been wonderful to see their encouragement and excitement as she has taken this next step in her journey with Christ. Moments like these remind us why investing in the next generation matters so deeply.

As we continue into this Easter season, I encourage you to continue praying for our children and youth. It is a blessing to watch faith come alive in the hearts of our young people, and I am grateful to walk this journey with you all.

-Adam- 423-607-0715 or abmccloud@gmail.com

CONDOLENCES FOR FEBRUARY

The GCC family of faith extends prayers of condolence to the following families whose loved ones have recently “passed out of death and into life” (I John 3:14).

- The Family of Anna Christian (1942-2026)
[Moher of Mary Byrd]
- The Family of John Branam (1937-2026)
[Husband of Joyce Branam]
- The Family of Tommy Legg Ward (1941-2026)
[Uncle of Gary Beverly]



EASTER

C H E D U L E

PALM SUNDAY

JEWS FOR JESUS

“Christ In The Passover”

w/ Jacob Fructman

March 29th
Sunday – 6 pm

GOOD FRIDAY

“THE 7 LAST WORDS”

Featuring

- Special Music by Joe Johnson & Cindy Hardee
- Unison Communion
- Scripture Reading
- Devotion

April 3rd
Friday – 6 pm

“Egg-Stravaganza”

Easter Egg Hunt

April 4th
Saturday – 11 am

Easter Breakfast

April 5th
Sunday – 10 am
(in place of SS)

Resurrection Day Service

April 5th
Sunday – 11 am

Sermon

“Before and After:
The Great(est) Demarcation”
(Mt. 27:45-53 / Heb. 10:19-20)

LOOKING AHEAD...

THE ETERNALS

In Concert

April 12th
Sunday – 6 pm



Be sure to invite family, friends, and neighbors

“POTLUCK” FELLOWSHIP MEAL

April 29th
Wednesday – 6 pm

Everyone invited!



graceFULLY-noted

- Thanks to our worship leaders in the month of February for helping us commence Lord's Day services with hearts and minds "set on things above" (Col. 3:2). Those were PAULA KEITH (February 8th), KAY COOK (February 15), and PATTY TURNER (February 22). Much appreciation to these volunteers for helping us get spiritually focused for Lord's Day services.
- Thanks to the GCC PRAISE TEAM for leading the ministry of music via "singing and making melody with the heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5:19). Their preparation and presentation always conveys a spiritual blessing to one and all. Special music for February included "Written In Red" (February 8) and "Sacrifice of Love" (February 15). On February 22nd Joe Johnson and Cindy Hardee sang a soul-gripping duet rendition of "Crucified with Christ". The Praise Team and congregational singing are under the excellent leadership of Vicki Clevinger and the superb musicianship of Lily Wise – Pianist and Cindy Hardee – Organist.
- Thanks to VICKI CLEVINGER for inspiring our Christian sense of serving, giving, helping, and volunteering with her "Muffin Message" for "Serving Others Sunday" on February 15th. Also thanks to SAMANTHA FOWLER, ROSALIE ARRINGTON, ELLA GARNER, and EDWARD THOMPSON for faithfully distributing muffins to everyone in the congregation.
- Thanks to CANDACE BENNETT for sharing a very compelling update / report and testimony regarding AGAPE WOMEN'S SERVICES. Much appreciation to one and all for the outpouring of baby clothes, blankets, shoes, care products, and \$-filled baby bottles to help AWS extend the love of Christ to struggling mothers (and fathers). Special thanks to SUZANNE JETER and LUCY BUSH for shepherding GCC's participation in the "Sanctity of Life" emphasis from January 18th through February 22nd. The opportunity and privilege of supporting AWS with our prayers and finances are a constant source of blessing we receive with grateful praise.
- Thanks to SUZANNE JETER for keeping our 'stash room' in good order and providing the wonderfully creative touch of an 8-pic display of scenes from the life of Christ. Stash rooms aren't just for supply inventory but spiritual inspiration. How great is that?
- Thanks to BRIAN BROOKS for serving as our 'PowerPoint sub' on Sunday, February 15th. Much appreciation to Brian for keeping our morning worship well-supported via technology.
- Thanks to PAULA KEITH, SUZANNE JETER, and GARY BEVERLY for assisting with the mailout preparation of the February edition of GraceNotes. It was a huge help that helps us all.
- Thanks to LARRY MOORE and GARY BEVERLY for attending to all the work and contractor scheduling to replace the baptistry heater. Also thanks to Larry for installing CO monitors on the rental property. These men are a 'God-send' to keep our house of worship and other properties well-maintained.
- GCC "kudos!" to EDWARD THOMPSON for his participation with the Andrew Johnson School Chorus to sing at the February meeting of the Kingsport Chamber of Commerce. In addition, congratulations to Edward for being selected as a trombone-player for the upcoming school year at Ross N. Robinson Middle School. Way to go, Edward! Keep on keeping on!
- Thanks to the DORCAS and ADELPHAI CIRCLE LADIES for preparing, delivering, and serving meals throughout the month for needs regarding sickness and condolence. Such 'hands-on' ministry not only meets immediate needs, but abundantly extends the love of Christ to members, friends, and neighbors.
- Thanks to BOBBY & KAY COOK, TONY & KAYE TIPTON, GARY & KITTY BEVERLY, and SAM PIERSON for meeting multiple transportation needs throughout the month. Their service has enabled others to remain connected to the church and manage life logistics in times of limited options.
- GCC prayers of praise are lifted for the "Good Confession" and baptism of AUDREY MCCLOUD on Sunday, March 1st. Audrey was baptized by her dad and our most excellent Children / Youth Minister Adam McCloud. May the Lord abundantly supply every good grace on Audrey as she lives for JESUS. Special thanks to LUCY BUSH and HENRY FUNKHOUSER for assisting with the baptism.
- Thanks to PAULA KEITH, LOIS STARNES, and JENNIFER STARNES for deep cleaning the church building on Saturday, February 28th. Their servants' hearts are so much appreciated.
- As always, many thanks to all GCCers for working together as a family of faith. The spirit of volunteerism and commitment to service are alive and well in our midst. Thanks be to God for His outpoured graces and mercies to sustain our fellowship strong. Of course, major contributors to the GCC family of faith are the GCC STAFF (paid and volunteer). Those include the following:

VOLUNTEERS

- Lisa Darnell [Adelphai Circle Leadership / Butterbean Auction]
- Vicki Clevinger [Praise Team Director / Worship Leader / Adelphai Circle Leadership]
- Lois Starnes [Dorcas Circle Leadership]
- Janice Hill [Dorcas Circle Leadership / Adult Sunday School]
- Henry Funkhouser [Adult Sunday School]

graceFULLY-noted, continued

- o Nick Bush [Adult Sunday School]
- o Wayne Darnell, Tony Tipton, Joie Kerns [House & Grounds Exterior]
- o Larry Moore & Gary Beverly [House & Grounds Interior and General Maintenance]
- o Kaye Tipton [Interior / Exterior Flowers]
- o Jennifer Starnes [Missions / Missions Board]
- o Jamie Abernathy, Jordan Arrington, Brian Brooks, Kaye Tipton [Tech Team Support]
- o Kitty Beverly [Multimedia Arts]
- o Brian Brooks [Webmaster]
- o Kay Cook, Robert Thompson, Jeff Arrington [Local Missions item inventory and delivery]

STAFF (Paid & Unpaid)

- o Kitty Beverly [Secretary, Administration, Media Arts]
- o Rebecca Phillips [Bookkeeping]
- o Adam McCloud [Children's / Youth Ministry]
- o Ethel Busick [Outreach / Inreach Assistance]
- o Vicki Clevinger [Music Ministry Leadership]
- o Lily Wise [Pianist]
- o Cindy Hardee [Organist]

CARDS & LETTERS

Thanks to the church for the beautiful flowers in the death of my sister, Janice Moore. Thanks for all the prayers and cards.

Love to all my Brothers and Sisters. God Bless All,
Charlotte (Clevinger)

P.S. Thanks to everyone for prayers and cards while I've been sick.

Thanks to everyone at church for the calls, cards, visits, and prayers while I was at NHC. I love you all!
Charlotte (Clevinger)

Dearest Grace Christian Church,

Words cannot describe how deeply grateful I am for your prayers and support. They were such a comfort to me and my mother. I am a walking miracle. Saved once again by the Grace of God. In Jesus' name, Amen!

*All my love,
Suzi Hill*

** a prayer I found that sums up my feelings

Heavenly Father, I come before You with a heart overflowing with gratitude for your immense love and healing grace. Thank you for listening to my prayers and for Your faithful presence during my time of sickness and vulnerability.

Thank You for mending my body, for the strength You've restored, and for bringing me out of darkness and into Your light. I am grateful for every breath, every beat of my heart, and the vitality You're given me.

I thank you for Your gentle touch that eased my pain and for the hope You provided when I felt weak. You are the ultimate Healer, and I praise You for Your miraculous power to restore and renew.

As I recover, help me to remember this experience and to use my health as a gift to serve You and others. Fill me with Your peace, joy, and resilience, so my life may be a testament to Your goodness and mercy.

May my words and actions always reflect the love You have poured into me. In Jesus' name, AMEN.

Bereavement Ladies,

Thank you for sharing your time and meal preparation for our family and loved ones.

*Love,
Joyce*

Just a note to thank the Circle ladies for sending me cards. I love to get mail and the cards they send are really nice and I do enjoy getting mail!

Thanks for keeping in touch. When I am able to get out once again I'll love to join all for lunch.

Ruth