

didn't prepare when there was opportunity. They frantically tried to prepare at the last minute – really after the last minute – but it was tragically too late. And then Jesus repeats His former admonition, “*Be on the alert, for you do not know the day or the hour*” (Matt. 25:13).

When asked in eternity future, “Where were you and what were you doing when Jesus came?” every soul will remember. The remembrance of the prepared will be a source of utter joy, jubilation, and celebration. The remembrance of the unprepared will be full of regret, resentment, and bitterness. The reality check in it all is to consider where you are and what you are doing right now as a possible “freeze frame moment,” forever set in memory should the Lord return. It is likely that the reading of this article will be forgotten by this time next year, unless of course, Jesus returned right now. In that case, it would be remembered eternally. Should that happen, how would it be remembered – as a milestone to glory or a millstone to perdition? That depends on where you are and what you are doing as per relationship to Jesus as Lord and Savior.

As we continue GROWING IN GRACE together, let us be ever ready, always prepared, and constantly expectant. The Second Coming of Jesus is ‘writ large’ in the New Testament. It’s not a matter of ‘if’ but ‘when’. And when that ‘when’ arrives, the moment will be ‘writ large’ in every memory for eternity. How will we remember it? Indeed, every moment has the potential to be a forever “memory-in-the-making.” May we live as if each moment was the last, “*Looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ*” (Titus 2:13).....

.....any day now,

Ed

ELDERS MEETING

January 13th
Tuesday—6 pm
[American Way Campus]



LADIES CIRCLES....

Adelphai Circle Meeting

January 8th
Thursday - 6 pm

Dorcas Circle Lunch

January 13th
Tuesday – 11:30 am
[Lunch at Texas Roadhouse]

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

BUTTERBEAN AUCTION



January 20th
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]



“POTLUCK” FELLOWSHIP MEAL and ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETING

January 28th
Wednesday – 6 pm

Thanks for bringing food, dessert, and drink items to share.





GEMS OF WISDOM FROM OUR FOREBEARS

“With the deepest feeling of my soul I can say that I am satisfied in Jesus now. But there is also the consciousness of how much fuller the revelation can be of the exceeding abundance of His grace. Let us never hesitate to say, ‘This is only the beginning!’.”

[by Andrew Murray, 1828-1917; in They Found The Secret, 1960, p. 117]

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION / CHILDREN’S & YOUTH MINISTRY UPDATE

The 2025 year-ending children and youth ministry calendar was highlighted by our “Children-Youth Christmas Program” on Sunday, December 14th. Children & Youth Ministry Director, Adam McCloud, organized the program around multiple sections of Scripture, music, and devotions. Our young people did a fantastic job and GCC, along with all the parents, are so proud.

As 2026 begins, watch, look, and listen for details about children / youth activities. Be sure to read Adam’s column below for news regarding the “Grace Cadets” program.

Don’t forget that Christian education is not just for kids. It is and must always remain a primary point of emphasis across the full span of life. Such emphasis is a regular part of all that we do at GCC, including Sunday School, Sun. AM Sermons, Sun. PM lessons, and Wed. PM Bible studies. May we always be lifelong learners of the Bible.



GRACE CADETS NEWS

As we step into this new year, I want to take a moment to say thank you to my Grace Christian Church family. Your incredible support and attendance at the children’s Christmas program meant so much to our kids. Seeing the church filled with encouragement, smiles, and applause helped make the season truly special for them. Thank you as well for your generosity, kindness, and gifts throughout the Christmas season—you made my family feel deeply loved and supported.

As we look ahead to the year before us, there is a sense of hope and excitement for what God has in store for our children and youth. We have recently begun a new study focused on what faith really is and how our faith shapes the journey of our lives. Through stories, discussion, and reflection, they are learning that faith is more than something we talk about—it’s something we live out every day as we trust God, take steps forward, and follow Him through every season of our lives.

Thank you for continuing to pray for, encourage, and invest in our next generation. I’m so grateful to begin this new year together, confident that God is at work and that the best is still ahead!

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

MISSIONS QUOTE

“God is pursuing with omnipotent passion a worldwide purpose of gathering joyful worshipers for Himself from every tribe and tongue and people.”

[by John Piper – in Let The Nations Be Glad!, 1993-2022]

MISSIONS UPDATE

As GCC begins 2026, our missions portfolio of support remains unchanged. Fourteen missions are being supported – 5 monthly and 9 on a rotating basis. In addition, 3 local missions are supported via donated items. Reports for December are as follows:

-Kay Cook reported delivery of 340 individual snack items to Ballad-HV Medical Center for the “Hospitality Snack Cart.”

-Jeff Arrington reported that 41 bars of soap are being held in inventory for the Sullivan County Jail Ministry “Hope Bags” to be distributed at year’s end. Our goal for 2026 remains at 1200+ bars.

-Robert Thompson reported that packages of Clorox / Lysol wipes are being held in inventory for the Andrew Johnson School “Clorox / Lysol Wipes Supply”.

Donated items from December’s “Warm Tree” have been delivered to Uplift Ministries. Uplift Directors Ronson and Sarah Griffin are on the calendar to speak on Sunday, January 4th for the evening service. In the days and weeks ahead we will once again commence participation in the “Sanctity of Life” emphasis sponsored by Agape Women’s Services. That emphasis includes the distribution of plastic baby bottles for \$ donations, as well as the collection of baby clothes, blankets, etc. Watch, look, and listen for more details.

As 2026 proceeds let us remember that the prayer support of our missions is as essential as the financial support. Moreover, let us be reminded that the Holy Spirit claims every Christian as a missionary right where he/she lives and works.

Be sure to check out the fellowship hall missions board as Jennifer Starnes keeps rotating information posted to help us remain missions informed, educated, and inspired.

CARDS & LETTERS

My loving Brothers and Sisters at Grace Christian Church,

Thank you for loving me through your welcomed visits, calls, abundant and delicious food and beautiful flowers at the death of my sweet daughter, Carol.

Your taking time in this busy Christmastime meant more than I have words to convey.

*I love you,
Carolyn Phillips*

I want to thank everyone at GCC for all their prayers & calls. It has been a hard recovery but I hope to get to drive next week & be back at church.

*Love,
Evelyn Shrout*

CONDOLENCES FOR DECEMBER

The GCC family of faith extends prayer 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 Mike Abernathy (1957-2025)
[Brother of Bob Abernathy]
- The Family of April Pridemore (1989- 2025)
[Niece of Lois Starnes]
- The Family of Kathleen Brewer (1933-2025)
[The late Hack Vaughn’s sister]
- The Family of Sherry Parker (1964-2025)
[Wayne Darnell’s step-sister]

graceFULLY-noted

- Thanks to our worship leaders for the month of December. Those include KAYE TIPTON (December 7), KAY COOK (December 14), LUCY BUSH (December 21), and SAMUEL PIERSON (December 28). Much appreciation to these volunteers for helping us commence each Lord's Day spiritually focused, fastened, and fixed on Jesus.
- Thanks to our PRAISE TEAM for leading the GCC ministry of music week after week. We are all beneficiaries of their preparation and presentation each Lord's Day. Throughout the Christmas season the Praise Team filled our sanctuary with sounds of the season to celebrate our Lord's birth. Special music included "Angels From the Realms of Glory" (December 7), "It's Still the Greatest Story Ever Told" (December 14), "Gloria (Our Savior Found Us)" (December 21), and "The Story of His Love" (December 28).
- Thanks to EMMA BUSICK for sharing her violin solo as a musical meditation for offering on Sunday morning, December 14th. GCC is proud of Emma for her pursuit of musical excellence in the DB High School Orchestra and is always blessed when she shares specials from her growing repertoire.
- Thanks to our children's youth minister, ADAM McCLOUD for leading our young people in preparing, practicing, and presenting devotional thoughts and special music at our Children's Christmas Program on Sunday evening, December 14th. The program was excellent and Adam and the Grace Cadets deserve our best and highest regard. Participating youth included EDWARD THOMPSON, SAWYER STANLEY, ROBERT STANLEY, EMILEAH STANLEY, AUDREY McCLOUD, ALEXANDRIA HILLYER, EMMA BUSICK, and SAMANTHA FOWLER. Well done, Grace Cadets!
- Thanks to this year's "CANDLE CREWS" for attending to the devotionals and lightings for each Sunday's candle on the Advent Wreath. Those included PATTY JOHNSON / HENRY FUNKHOUSER (Nov. 30), [Ed] / MARYBETH THOMPSON (Dec. 7), [Ed] / SAM PIERSON (Dec. 14), BOBBY COOK / DAVID McCREADY (Dec. 21), and CHERISH HUGHES / BRAD HUGHES (Dec. 24). Much appreciation to the 5 crews for keeping the light of Christmas burning bright.
- Thanks to NYKI BRIGGS and JACKIE JOBE for preparing this year's Christmas fruit, nut, and candy baskets. The baskets were beautifully done and conveyed good cheer to several families for the holidays. Much appreciation to Nyki and Jackie for sharing their skills to create true 'designer baskets'. Special thanks to Edwards, Tipton, and Witt Insurance Agency in Kingsport for entrusting supplies of fruit to area churches for benevolent distribution.
- Thanks to ONE AND ALL for joining on Wednesday, December 24th to share in our Christmas Eve Service. Attendance was fantastic and created an inspirational sight to behold with a full-perimeter "Unity Circle" of glowing candlelight around the sanctuary. Much gratitude is extended to all of this year's participants who filled every part with excellence. Those included LILY WISE, CINDY HARDEE, KITTY BEVERLY, VICKI CLEVINGER, HENRY FUNKHOUSER, KATHY HAKES, KATIE CLIFFTON, BOBBY COOK, EDWARD THOMPSON, JOHN THOMAS HUGHES, JOE & PATTY JOHNSON, and BRAD & CHERISH HUGHES.
- Thanks to ROSE LANE, PHYLLIS JACKSON, KATHY HAKES, DAVE NEALY, NYKI BRIGGS, MARY CARROLL, HENRY FUNKHOUSER, VICKI CLEVINGER, EDWARD THOMPSON, ROBERT & MARYBETH THOMPSON, WAYNE & LISA DARNELL, and TONY & KAYE TIPTON for hosting the Roller-Russ "Christmas Outreach" on Sunday, December 23rd. Special thanks to ROSE LANE for working hard to gather all the information and to spend all the time shopping to ensure that each RR resident received personalized gifts. GCC is so thankful for the friendship and fellowship of our RR friends and for the privilege of sharing Christmas in their home. In addition, much appreciation to all the GCCers who donated monetarily to help purchase the gifts.
- Thanks to HENRY FUNKHOUSER, MARY CARROLL, CARLOS BRADLEY, and GARY & KITTY BEVERLY for attending to this year's Poinsettia Tree set-up, arrangement, watering, and clean-up. The poinsettias were a beautiful adornment in our sanctuary during the Christmas season. Much appreciation to all the poinsettia donors who purchased and shared their plants for everyone to enjoy. Also thanks to BOBBY & KAY COOK for their servants' hearts to deliver the remaining poinsettias to Wilcox Hall on Monday, December 29th.
- Thanks to a HOST OF GCCers for donating an outpoured quantity of winter items for this year's 'Warm Tree'. The items will be delivered to a local ministry for distribution to those enduring long seasons of homelessness, displacement, and deprivation. Your generosity will make a huge difference. [See "MISSIONS UPDATE" for more information.]
- Thanks to ROSE LANE, GARY BEVERLY, PAULA KEITH, PATTY TURNER, and SUZANNE JETER for helping with the mailout of December's church newsletter. The folding, stuffing, labelling, and stamping done as teamwork greatly expedited the task to get it done in good order.

graceFULLY-noted, continued

- Thanks to WAYNE DARNELL and TONY TIPTON for graciously building the front porch steps and landing of Barry Braan's house. Barry generously donated the 20 ft. aluminum ramp to the church to help us help others who have wheelchair and walker challenges. Much appreciation to Barry, as well as Wayne and Tony, for being a shining example of neighbors helping neighbors.
- GCC prayers of praise are lifted for the decision of TOM & PENNY MURRAY to place their membership with us at Grace Christian Church on Sunday, December 28th. Be sure to welcome and add to your church directory the following.

TOM & PENNY MURRAY
237 Worthington Dr.
Kingsport, TN 37663
(423) 306-5855

- Thanks to GARY BEVERLY, WAYNE DARNELL, LARRY MOORE, and SCOTT TREADWAY for attending to various maintenance, repair, and upgrade needs at both campuses, as well as the resident houses during the month of December. Their efforts are so much appreciated and account for lots of savings to the church.
- Thanks to a HOST OF GCCers, including the DORCAS and ADELPHAI CIRCLES, for providing lots of extra "hands-on-help" in December to meet all the needs. A proliferation of needs regarding transportation, visitation, food, and home assistance requires lots of teamwork. The GCC family of faith has well responded with an outpouring of sacrifice and service.
- Thanks to WAYNE DARNELL for preparing and sharing "heapin' helpin's" of his world-famous barbecue at our fellowship meal on Wednesday, December 31st. Also thanks to ONE & ALL for bringing side dishes and dessert items to share. The meal was delicious and the fellowship delightful. What an awesome way to end 2025!
- Congratulations to EDWARD THOMPSON for achieving yet another level in his pursuit of martial arts excellence. On Tuesday, December 9th, Edward received his "advanced red belt" in taekwondo from Taylor Martial Arts. Way to go, Edward!

G-C-C

A wonderful place

2B!

A wonderful

Fam-i-lee!



- As always, thanks without end to the GCC STAFF & VOLUNTEERS for working all year long to keep our family of faith functioning in good order. Those include the following:

VOLUNTEERS

- Lisa Darnell [Adelphai Circle Leadership / Butterbean Auction]
- Vicki Clevinger [Praise Team Director / Worship Leader / Adephai Circle Leadership]
- Lois Starnes [Dorcas Circle Leadership]
- Janice Hill [Dorcas Circle Leadership / Adult Sunday School]
- Henry Funkhouser [Adult Sunday School]
- Wayne Darnell, Tony Tipton, Joie Kerns [House & Grounds Exterior]
- Larry Moore & Gary Beverly [House & Grounds Interior and General Maintenance]
- Kaye Tipton [Interior / Exterior Flowers]
- Jennifer Starnes [Missions Board]
- Jamie Abernathy, Jordan Arrington, Brian Brooks, Kaye Tipton [Tech Team Support]
- Kitty Beverly [Multimedia Arts]
- Brian Brooks [Webmaster]
- Kay Cook, Robert Thompson, Jeff Arrington [Local Missions item inventory and delivery]

STAFF (Paid & Unpaid)

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

