

May each of us be blessed with eyes to see, ears to hear, minds to know, and hearts to understand that "bigness" is not always as "big a deal" as we might think. In God's economy small things are often valued as the biggest and best. There is a place in our spiritual lives to think, seek, and value SMALL.

In Christ,
Ed

ELDERS MEETING

August 11th
[American Way Campus]



LADIES CIRCLES

Dorcas Circle Meeting

August 11th
Tuesday – 10:30 am
Lunch at Riverfront Seafood Restaurant

Adelphai Circle

August 13th
Thursday – 6 pm

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



BUTTERBEAN AUCTION

August 18th
Tuesday – 1 pm

Everyone invited!

[For more information about the "Butterbean Auction" or about donating items, you may contact "Butterbean Auctioneer" Lisa Darnell at (423) 782-0963.]

GEMS OF WISDOM FROM OUR FOREBEARS

"In all of the world's religions, man endeavors to reach up and somehow find God.... Only in Christianity do you find God reaching down to man. Only in Christianity does God do Himself that which is necessary for us to be reconciled to Him. What does He do? He gives grace.

Grace has been poured out by God to bring us to Himself. Without grace, we cannot come. And grace is poured out to help after we come to Him as well. Without grace, we cannot continue with Him. Grace is that wondrous gift given to those who have nothing with which to pay; to those who do not deserve it at all....

We must not make a mockery of grace by trying to do what only grace can do".

[by D. James Kennedy, 1930-2007; from God's Absolute Best For You, 2001, p. 178]

CARDS & LETTERS

Grace Christian Church,

Thank you for the beautiful flower vase for the passing of my mother, and thanks for all of the prayers, cards, and visits at the hospital. We love our Church Family!

Love,
Wayne & Lisa Darnell

To My Church Family,

It's me again. I want to thank you for the cards, calls, text messages and visits during our recent car accident. A special thank you to Ed for his faithful visits during my hospitalization. I broke my sternum (a very painful break). My granddaughter Emma was with me. Thankfully I was the only one injured.

We both appreciate your prayers & concerns. We love you.

In Christ,
Ethel & Emma Busick

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION UPDATE

The big event on the Christian Education calendar in July was the “Level Up!”—themed 1-Day Vacation Bible School on Sunday, July 12th. Led by our Children’s/Youth Minister Adam McCloud, the afternoon was filled with the contagious enthusiasm of young people learning, laughing, singing, and having a wonderful time together. Adam organized everything on a station-rotation basis, which kept the afternoon flowing smoothly for 3 hours of non-stop fun in a Christian education context. Plenty of assistance was provided through the ‘hands-on’ help of numerous volunteers.

As August arrives our young people commence the 2026-2027 school year. Return to school means the resumption of learning as a daily routine. Everyone is encouraged to incorporate the Bible learning opportunities offered at GCC into that routine. For our children and youth those opportunities are available multiple times a week on the following schedule:

- Sunday School – 10 am
- Children’s Church – 11 am
- Sunday “Grace Cadets” – 6 pm
- Wednesday “Grace Cadets” – 6 pm

For more information about these opportunities and other youth activities, please see Adam’s “Grace Cadets News” block or contact him at (423) 607-0715 or abmcccloud@gmail.com.

Of course, Christian education for everyone, including adults, is a mainstay across the entire GCC weekly schedule of activities. Those include Sunday School at 10 am, Sunday morning worship at 11 am, Sunday evening worship at 6 pm, and Wednesday S.A.L.T. Bible Study at 6 pm.

Let us one and all commit ourselves to remaining lifelong learners, especially as students of the Bible. May we enter the conviction of the Psalmist who said...

“O, how I love Your Word! It is my meditation all the day.”
(Psalm 119:97)



GRACE CADETS NEWS

As another school year begins, many of our families are settling back into familiar routines—packing lunches, completing homework, cheering from the sidelines, and filling calendars with school activities. While summer always seems to fly by, there’s something exciting about a fresh start, and we’re looking forward to another incredible season of growing together in our children and youth ministry.

I want to say thank you to everyone who helped make our Level Up! VBS such an incredible success. It was an amazing day filled with laughter, worship, games, and opportunities for kids to grow in their faith. We were blessed by so many volunteers who gave their time and talents to make the day special, and it was wonderful to see both familiar and new faces joining us.

I’m also incredibly thankful for everyone who supported our mission project during VBS. Because of your generosity, we were able to provide care packages that have already begun reaching children during some of the most difficult moments of their lives. It’s hard to imagine being suddenly removed from your home with very few belongings, but those small toiletry bags and comfort gifts have already served as tangible reminders that someone cares and that God has not forgotten them. Thank you for helping us share Christ’s love in such a practical and meaningful way!

The Grace Cadets have recently been studying the lives of Jacob and Joseph. Their stories have sparked some wonderful discussions about the consequences of making decisions without seeking God and the incredible things that can happen when we trust Him, even through life’s challenges. Our kids are discovering that while our choices matter, God’s grace, faithfulness, and plans are always greater than our mistakes.

As we settle into new routines this fall, I want to encourage each of you to continue making church a regular part of your family’s routine. Consistency in worship, fellowship, and learning God’s Word helps build a foundation of faith that will last a lifetime. If you know families with children or teens who are looking for a church home, invite them to join us! Every new child who walks through our doors is another opportunity to share the love of Christ and help shape the next generation.

Thank you for your continued prayers, encouragement, and faithful support of the Grace Cadets. I truly believe God is building something special through this ministry, and I’m excited to see how He continues to use our church to impact the lives of children, youth, and families throughout our community!

—Adam— 423-607-0715 or abmcccloud@gmail.com

AUGUST is here....

“FRIENDSHIP SUNDAY”

on
August 9th
with
Catered Meal
[immediately following morning service]

Everyone Invited!



RANKIN BURRESS

“Honduras Mission Report”

August 23rd
Sunday - 6 pm

Save The Date!



SEPTEMBER is coming....

“WAYNE’S & TONY’S FISH FRY”

September 26th
Saturday – 4 pm

Everyone Invited!



**“FIRST DAYS OF AUTUMN”
POTLUCK
FELLOWSHIP MEAL**

September 30th
Wednesday - 6 pm

Everyone Invited!



Installment #3
of
**THE E. PATRICK HULL
“New Testament Prayers Series”**

“Jesus’ Garden of Gethsemane Prayer”
(Luke 22:41-46)

September 27th
Sunday - 6 pm

Everyone is encouraged to attend.



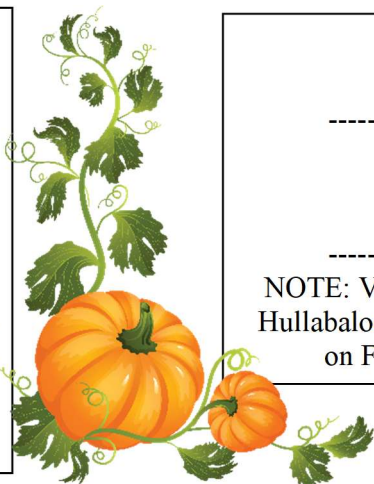
Heads up for OCTOBER....

“Sh-h-h; Be Still”
FALL PREACHING MISSION

October 18-21
Sunday – Wednesday
6 pm each evening

A full schedule including host churches,
preachers, sermon titles, and special music
will be published in the September edition of
GraceNotes.

Save The Dates!



Walk-Thru / Drive-Thru
“HULLABALOO”

October 31st
Saturday
6 – 8 pm

NOTE: Volunteers are needed to staff the
Hullabaloo Event and to prepare treat bags
on Friday, October 30th at 1pm.

MISSIONS UPDATE

The regular missions program at GCC continues with a supported portfolio of 14 missions. Five are supported monthly and 9 on a rotating basis. A full list of these 14 is published weekly on the announcements/prayer list insert included in the Sunday bulletin. In addition to the aforementioned, 3 local missions are regularly supported via donated items. The status of those for June is as follows:

- Kay Cook reported delivery of 128 individual snack items to the Ballard-HV “Hospitality Snack Cart”;
- Jeff Arrington reported that 94 more bars of soap were donated in July, bringing our total inventory to 897 bars as we continue pressing onward toward our goal of 1200+ bars. The bars of soap are due to be delivered to the Sullivan County Jail Ministry the first part of December. They will be included in “Hope Bags” distributed to inmates and jail employees during the Christmas season.
- Robert Thompson reported that Clorox/Lysol wipes will be delivered to Andrew Johnson School as the new school year begins in August.

As you recall Ephraim Tshuma and Family joined us on Sunday evening, May 17th to share with us their plans for summer mission work in Honduras. The work was completed and the Tshumas returned to GCC on Sunday evening, July 17th for a report. The work on the church building and the VBS sessions led really came alive for us with the Tshumas’ commentary accompanied by the PowerPoint visuals. GCC is blessed by the opportunity to partner with the Tshumas to support their 2026 summer mission work.

An addition to the missions calendar is the upcoming report from Rankin Burress who will be with us on Sunday, August 23rd. Rankin is returning to Honduras for a summer term of work on August 1st. Rankin is a senior at DB and has already become a veteran of the Honduras mission field along with his family, having served multiple times helping build churches and sharing the Gospel. We look forward to Rankin’s return later this month and everyone is encouraged to save the date!

Be sure to check out the missions board in the fellowship hall for featured mission work constantly rotated and creatively displayed by Jennifer Starnes. Thanks to one and all for remaining always interested in, engaged with, and supportive of the GCC missions program.

MISSIONS QUOTE

“There is the “GO” and the “LO” of missions. It starts with “Go ye therefore...” (Mt. 28:19) and it ends with “and lo I am with you always” (Mt. 28:20). “Go” is the commission and “Lo” is the companionship. The “Go” and the “Lo” are both essential.

(by Herbert Lockyer, 1886-1984; from
“Meditation For Annual Missionary Day”;
in All The Holy Days and Holidays, 1968, p. 179))

graceFULLY-noted

- Thanks to our July worship leaders who helped us commence Sunday worship services with hearts, minds, and spirits fully engaged. Those included CASEY CAIN (July 12), MARCIA PHILLIPPE (July 19), and SUZANNE JETER (July 26).
- Thanks to the GCC PRAISE TEAM for preparing and sharing a most excellent series of praise music throughout July. Selections included “I Will Heal Their Land” (July 5), “I Am Your Salvation” (July 12) and “His Love Remains” (July 26). Also thanks to JOE JOHNSON and CINDY HARDEE for providing our special music on Sunday, July 19th. Joe and Cindy shared a vocal duet rendition of the wonderfully upbeat toe-tapping 1953 Stuart Hamblen classic “First Day In Heaven”. As always, much appreciation to VICKI CLEVINGER for faithfully serving as the leader of our praise team and worship music, as well as to CINDY HARDEE for masterfully capturing the musical ebbs and flows of our weekly worship at the ivories of the Kawai Baby Grand.
- Thanks to the GCC young people who helped with our 250th Independence Day Service on Sunday, July 5th. EVERETT GARNER held the Bible for the pledge, ELLA GARNER helped with the offering and SAMANTHA FOWLER, EDWARD THOMPSON, and AUDREY MCCLOUD distributed patriotic pens to everyone in the congregation. The involvement of our youth always adds a special touch and fortifies our vision for the future.
- Thanks to ADAM MCCLOUD for his most excellent leadership of our 1-Day VBS on Sunday, July 12th. His planning, recruiting, organizing, and executing of everything around the “Level Up!” theme was well-done and well received. Special thanks to this year’s VBS team. The lesson was taught by ADAM, crafts were led by NYKI BRIGGS, LUCY BUSH, and ROSE LANE, the mission was organized by LUCY, games were led by HENRY FUNKHOUSER, music was led by VICKI CLEVINGER, many of the supplies were provided by SUZANNE JETER, and refreshments were provided and served by KAY COOK. Also thanks to the volunteers who provided overall supervision and assistance. Those included GARY & KITTY BEVERLY, and BRIAN & LEEANN BROOKS.
- Thanks to EPHRAIM TSHUMA and FAMILY for sharing a post-mission report about their work in Honduras on Sunday, July 19th. Their report included lots of insight and inspiration about church construction and VBS leadership among our Christian brothers and sisters in Central America. Much appreciation to the Tshumas for helping us remain missions-minded.
- Thanks to PAT HULL for sharing with us Installment #2 of the E. Patrick Hull “New Testament Prayers Series” on the Sundays of July 26th and August 2nd. Pat’s teaching was and is always engaging and compelling. GCC is richly blessed to have him as one of our own. Special thanks to ELIZABETH BRYANT for faithfully serving as Pat’s teaching assistant.

graceFULLY-noted, cont.

- GCC prayers of praise are lifted for the baptism of SARAH SHORT on Sunday, July 19th. Many thanks to ROSE LANE, ADAM MCCLOUD, GARY BEVERLY, KAY COOK, and BOBBY COOK for assisting with the baptismal service.
- GCC congratulations to JAXON BUCKLEY and LILY HUTSON who were married at GCC on Saturday, August 1st. Jaxon is the son of our own Josh Buckley and brother of our own Gavin Collette. May God richly bless Jaxon and Lily for a lifetime of wedded bliss to His glory.
- Thanks to ROSE LANE, GARY BEVERLY, NICK BUSH, and LUCY BUSH for serving as the 'July Newsletter Team'. Their assembly line work to fold, stuff, stamp, and label got it done in good order. Much appreciation to the quartet of helpers.
- Thanks to all GCCers for preparing and sharing the delicious spread of food, dessert, and drink items at our "Potluck" Fellowship Meal on Wednesday, July 29th. The food combined with fellowship was and always is an experience of life at its best in our family of faith. Special thanks to SUZANNE JETER and VICKI CLEVINGER for lots of pre-meal preparation and to ONE & ALL for jumping in after the meal to get everything cleaned up and set up in good order.
- Thanks to PAULA KEITH and KAYE TIPTON for attending to the exterior and interior floral décor of GCC. The beauty of flowers always brings joy.
- Thanks to WAYNE DARNELL, TONY TIPTON, and JOIE KERNS for working hard this summer to keep our GCC campuses mowed, trimmed, and cleaned. Their selfless service is a God-send to us all.
- Thanks to PARKER GOLDEN for his commitment to learn and operate our new sound system. Parker is at the helm of all we are hearing every Sunday morning and his service is making us sound even better.
- Thanks to LARRY MOORE for overseeing the HVAC contractor work in July. His attention to this facility-need expedited the work and got us 'cooled off' in these hot days of summer.
- Thanks to a host of GCCers who gave of themselves and of their time in July to serve our family of faith in a season of urgent needs for so many. Needs of transportation, food, and domestic assistance have steadily grown in the last two years. So many helping so many have truly made all the difference in simply, but profoundly, "being the church" as depicted in the New Testament. Special thanks to LOIS STARNES for her daily service to organize, schedule, and shepherd lots of the work and to ETHEL BUSICK for making sure we all "stay in touch" as a family.
- Of course, always we are grateful for the GCC STAFF (paid and unpaid) and VOLUNTEERS who are engaged in year-round services that include weekly / daily responsibilities that meet the needs of one and all. 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]
- Henry Funkhouser [Adult Sunday School]
- Nick Bush [Adult Sunday School]
- Wayne Darnell, Tony Tipton, Joie Kerns [House & Grounds Exterior]
- Larry Moore & Gary Beverly [House & Grounds Interior and General Maintenance]
- Kaye Tipton and Paula Keith [Interior / Exterior Flowers]
- Jennifer Starnes [Missions / Missions Board]
- Brian & LeeAnn Brooks, [Tech Team Support]
- Kitty Beverly [Multimedia Arts]
- Brian Brooks [Webmaster]
- Parker Golden [Audio Tech]
- 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]
- Cindy Hardee [Pianist / Organist]

CONDOLENCES FOR JULY

The GCC family of faith extends heartfelt condolences to several families who have recently experienced the passing of a loved one. May God's good graces and peace be multiplied to the following:

- The Family of David Redd (1939-2026)
[GCC neighbor in 2nd Oakdale House]
- The Family of Sharon Bushong (1956-2026)
[Longtime member of Oakwood Forest Christian Church → Grace Covenant Church / Grace Christian Church]
- The Family of Bud Bolton (1953 - 2006)
[Brother of Patty Johnson in Atlanta, GA]