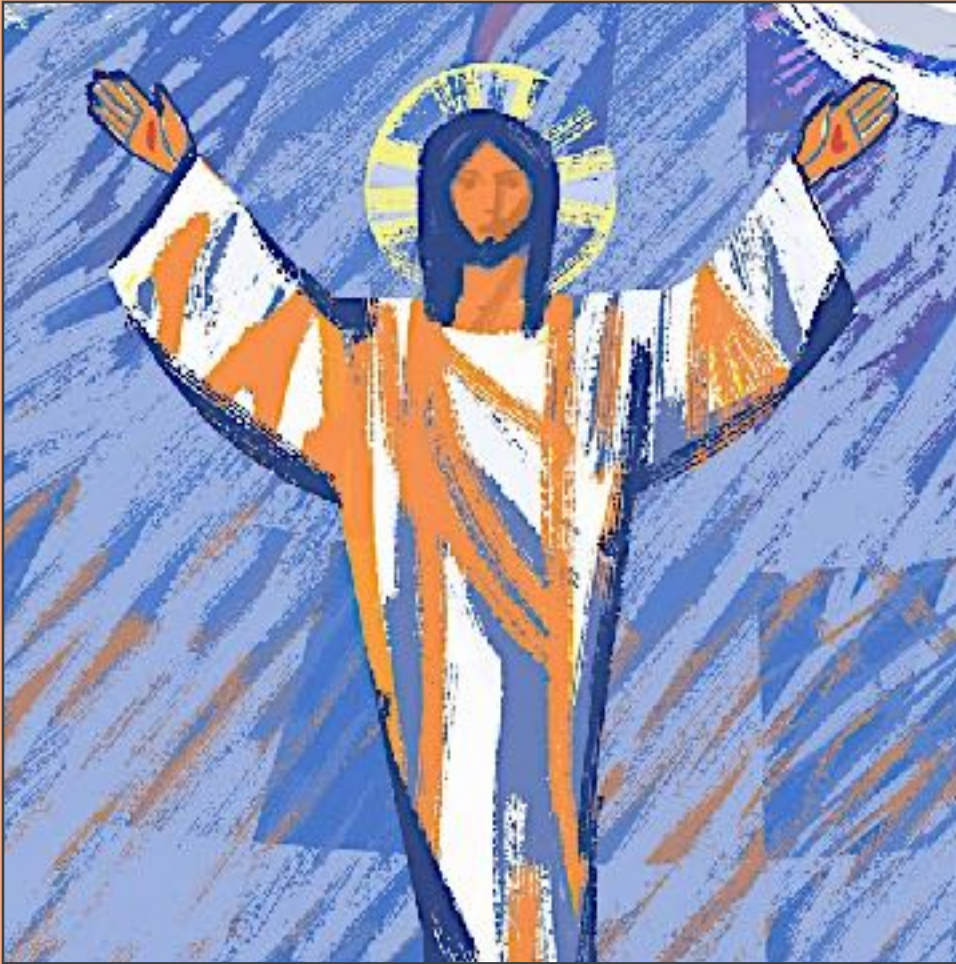


Grace Episcopal Church

Grace is a Christ-centered Community devoted to Servant Ministry and Spiritual Growth.



*The Seventh Sunday
of Easter*

*May 17, 2026
9:30 AM*

Holy Eucharist

Interpreting This Week's Prayer

The Collect for the 7th Sunday in Easter: *O God, the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: Do not leave us comfortless, but send us your Holy Spirit to strengthen us, and exalt us to that place where our Savior Christ has gone before; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.*

Dear Father: After a short time on earth, Jesus returned to the place where he lives with you as One God. I wish I had known him while he walked among his friends, just as they must have wished that he could stay with them forever. Thank you for sending the Holy Spirit long ago to comfort, strengthen, and connect those who loved Jesus to him in an undying bond. Please continue to give us that same gift, the gift of your Spirit, so that we can be connected to Jesus in this life and be with him, fully, in the age to come. In His Name I offer this prayer, Amen.



GRACE
EPISCOPAL CHURCH + SHEFFIELD, ALABAMA

Prelude

Processional Hymn 214 Hail the day that sees him rise

THE WORD OF GOD

Celebrant Alleluia. Christ is risen.

People *The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.*

The Celebrant and People say

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Song of Praise Hymn 494 Crown Him with many crowns (vss 1 & 3)

Crown him with many crowns, the Lamb upon his throne
Hark! how the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own
Awake, my soul, and sing of him who died for thee
And hail him as thy matchless King through all eternity

Crown him the Lord of life, who triumphed o'er the grave
And rose victorious in the strife for those he came to save
His glories now we sing who died, and rose on high
Who died, eternal life to bring, and lives that death may die

Collect of the Day

O God, the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: Do not leave us comfortless, but send us your Holy Spirit to strengthen us, and exalt us to that place where our Savior Christ has gone before; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

The First Lesson

Acts 1:6-14

This Sunday has two names: The 7th Sunday of Easter and the Sunday after the Ascension. The Ascension is the event described in this lesson. It takes place ten days before Pentecost, the day when the Holy Spirit comes upon the disciples. Jesus' message here seems to be that unless he goes away, the Spirit won't come – and even though the disciples can't imagine it now, they'll be glad when that happens. Because, the Spirit will connect them to Jesus in a way that would never have been possible if he were physically present to them as a regular human being.

When the apostles had come together, they asked Jesus, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

Psalm 68:1-10, 33-36 *Exsurgat Deus*

This is a victory psalm and is associated with the Ark of the Covenant being processed into Jerusalem by King David. It presents God as both a mighty warrior and one who defends the most vulnerable.

- 1 Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered; *
 let those who hate him flee before him.
- 2 Let them vanish like smoke when the wind drives it away; *
 as the wax melts at the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.
- 3 But let the righteous be glad and rejoice before God; *
 let them also be merry and joyful.
- 4 Sing to God, sing praises to his Name; exalt him who rides upon the heavens; *
 YAHWEH is his Name, rejoice before him!
- 5 Father of orphans, defender of widows, *
 God in his holy habitation!
- 6 God gives the solitary a home and brings forth prisoners into freedom; *
 but the rebels shall live in dry places.
- 7 O God, when you went forth before your people, *
 when you marched through the wilderness,
- 8 The earth shook, and the skies poured down rain,
 at the presence of God, the God of Sinai, *
 at the presence of God, the God of Israel.
- 9 You sent a gracious rain, O God, upon your inheritance; *
 you refreshed the land when it was weary.
- 10 Your people found their home in it; *
 in your goodness, O God, you have made provision for the poor.
- 33 Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth; *
 sing praises to the Lord.
- 34 He rides in the heavens, the ancient heavens; *
 he sends forth his voice, his mighty voice.
- 35 Ascribe power to God; *
 his majesty is over Israel; his strength is in the skies.
- 36 How wonderful is God in his holy places! *
 the God of Israel giving strength and power to his people!
 Blessed be God!

The Second Lesson

1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11

Peter continues to reflect on the problem of persecution in today's lesson: if Jesus is King—if they chose the right team, so to speak—why do these Christians continue to suffer abuse? A couple of interesting things come up here. For one, Peter reminds his readers that they have the Holy Spirit. We can look back at today's first reading from Acts and see that Jesus didn't establish his kingdom by taking over Jerusalem and abolishing suffering for his followers. He established his kingdom by sending the Spirit. Two, Peter comforts his readers by reminding them that they're not alone. They are connected to Jesus and they are connected to other Christians, who are also suffering for their faith. Altogether, they are the Body of Christ, a body that was injured on the cross and restored in the Resurrection.

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.

The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

Gospel Hymn 204

Now the green blade riseth

Please sing vs 1 & 2 before the Gospel.

Now the green blade riseth from the buried grain
Wheat that in dark earth many days has lain
Love lives again, that with the dead has been
Love is come again like wheat that springeth green

In the grave they laid him, Love whom hate had slain
Thinking that never he would wake again
Laid in the earth like grain that sleeps unseen
Love is come again like wheat that springeth green

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

John 17:1-11

This lesson is a part of Jesus' "High Priestly Prayer." It's called that because he is interceding (going between) his followers and his Father. In Judaism, the High Priest prayed and sacrificed to God on behalf of all the people. How, exactly, is Jesus interceding here? He is asking for his disciples to know the Father as completely as he does. This, in fact, is Jesus' definition of "eternal life!"

Jesus looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

"I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one."

The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Gospel Hymn 204

Now the green blade riseth

Please sing vs 3 after the Gospel.

Forth he came at Easter, like the risen grain
He that for three days in the grave had lain
Quick from the dead my risen Lord is seen
Love is come again like wheat that springeth green

The Sermon

The Reverend Danielle Thompson

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the People

The Leader and People pray responsively.

In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

Silence

For all people in their daily life and work;

For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.

For this community, the nation, and the world. We pray for Donald, our president; Kay, our governor; and for the mayors, city councils, and county commissions of the Shoals;

For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.

For the just and proper use of your creation;

For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;

For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

For the peace and unity of the Church of God;

For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the Truth.

For Sean, our Presiding Bishop; Glenda, our Bishop; Richard, our Bishop-Elect; Danielle, our Priest; Josh, our Deacon; and for all bishops, priests, and deacons;

For all who serve God in his Church.

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation.

Silence

The People may add their own petitions.

We pray for those on our intercessory prayer list, saying together

Elijah, Reagan, Penney, The Booth Family, Suzy, Bennie, Robin, Wayne, Ron, Tommy B, LaVera, Peter, Doug, Mark, Courtney, Bruce, Frances, Etelka, Jerry, June, David, Betty, Dan, Ro, Heather, Gail, Deborah, & Jessica.

We pray for all whose work puts them in harm's way and for those on active duty in the military, saying together

Joshua, Drake, Carter, Ethan, Jacobi, Kahleel, Henry, Jacob, Kadin, Dustin, Rebekah, Bryan, & William.

Hear us, Lord;
For your mercy is great.

We pray for those celebrating birthdays or anniversaries:
Rita & David Kelly, & Samuel Desselle

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life.
Silence

We will exalt you, O God our King;
And praise your Name for ever and ever.

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom.
Silence

Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;
Who put their trust in you.

Concluding Collect

Lord Jesus Christ you said to your apostles, "Peace I give to you; my own peace I leave with you." Regard not our sins, but the faith of your Church, and give to us the peace and unity of that heavenly City, where with the Father and the Holy Spirit, you live and reign, now and for ever. *Amen.*

The Peace

The Celebrant says to the People

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People *And also with you.*

THE HOLY COMMUNION

The Offertory

Offertory Anthem

Knowing You

Grace Choir

All I once held dear, built my life upon
All this world reveres, and wars to own
All I once thought gain I have counted loss
Spent and worthless now, compared to this

Now my heart's desire is to know You more
To be found in You, and known as Yours
To possess by faith what I could not earn
All surpassing gift of righteousness

Oh to know the power of Your risen life
And to know You in Your sufferings
To become like You in Your death, my Lord
So with You to live, and never die

Knowing You, Jesus, knowing You
There is no greater thing
You're my all, You're the best
You're my joy, my righteousness
And I love You Lord

Doxology Hymn

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow
Praise him, all creatures here below
Alleluia
Praise him above, ye heavenly host
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
Alleluia

Instructions for receiving Communion are found at the end of this prayer.

The Great Thanksgiving *Eucharistic Prayer A*

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

But chiefly are we bound to praise you for the glorious resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Paschal Lamb, who was sacrificed for us, and has taken away the sin of the world. By his death he has destroyed death, and by his rising to life again he has won for us everlasting life.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Sanctus S-125

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.

Then the Celebrant continues

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith,

Celebrant and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The Celebrant continues.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. *AMEN.*

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

People and Celebrant

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

Facing the People, the Celebrant says the following Invitation:
The Gifts of God for the People of God.

The Communion

Please come to the altar rail to receive Communion. You may kneel or stand. Receive a wafer from the Priest by holding out your hands. To receive the wine, please dip the wafer in the chalice or drink from the chalice. If you do not wish to receive Communion, cross your arms over your chest and the Priest will offer you a Blessing.

Communion Hymn 18, All. III Bind us together

*Refrain: Bind us together Lord, bind us together
With cords that cannot be broken
Bind us together Lord, bind us together with Love*

There is only one God. There is only one King
There is only one body that is why we sing

We are the fam'ly of God. We are the promise divine
We are the chosen design We are the glorious new wine

Communion Hymn 33, All. III Father, make us one

*Refrain: Father, make us one, Father, make us one
That the world may know Thou hast sent the Son
Father, make us one*

Behold, how pleasant and how good it is
For brethren to dwell in unity
For there the Lord commands the blessing: life forever more

Postcommunion Prayer

The Celebrant and People continue

Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Easter Blessing

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. *Amen.*

Recessional Hymn 603 When Christ was lifted from the earth

Dismissal

Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

Servants Today - May 17

VOD Jerry Shea **Safety** Mike Williams **Greeter** Jim & Jackie Niles **Usher** Steve Cummings **Reader** Kris Wells

Acolytes Kris Wells & Jen Davis **Chalice** Patti Thorne & Kris Wells **Server** John Walls **Cross** Joshua Davis

Altar Guild

May Woodie Christopher, Susan Edlich, Julie Clement, Susan Kirkland, Bo Larsen, Jacque Stutts, & Karen Wesson

The altar flowers are given in memory and honor of
Bunny Willard's parents, Mary & Isaac Johnson, III - Anniversary May 8, 1942
Bunny and her Beloved, Peary Willard - Anniversary May 16, 1981

Rev. Danielle would love to hear from you! Please do not hesitate to contact her!

931-636-4898

THOMDL80@gmail.com

Grace Church Vestry 2026

Lisa Gardner
Annie Laurie Gray
Jerry Shea - Senior Warden

Chris Earl
Kris Wells
Troy Youngblood

Dennis Cole
David McKinley - Junior Warden
Janet Port - Treasurer
Darrall Todd - Clerk

Grace Episcopal Church

103 Darby Avenue, PO Box 838
Sheffield, AL 35660

Office: 256-383-2014

Text: 256-336-4543

Email: gracesheffieldoffice@gmail.com

Website: graceepiscopalsheffield.dioala.org

The Reverend Danielle Thompson, **Rector**

The Reverend Josh Vacik, **Deacon**

Parish Musician: Christa Belue Byrd

Organist: Nancy Hughes Bolte

Bookkeeper: Gayle Ozblin

Parish Administrator: Lane Hardison Ennis



ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY, MAY 17

Worship: 9:30 AM Holy Eucharist

Connect: Stay for Fellowship in our Parish Hall after the service

Keep in touch: Fill out a contact information card or send a text to Danielle

ONGOING & UPCOMING

This afternoon: Drinks with the Davises: Drinks and snacks at Danielle & Josh's house, the last three Sundays in May: 5/17, 5/24, and 5/31

Saturday: Soup Kitchen Team One: Contact Dennis Cole for questions or to volunteer to help serve lunch at Shoals Community Soup Kitchen on May 23! (938)214-9148

Next Sunday: Fellowship POTLUCK: Bring your favorite SNACK to share at fellowship on Sunday, May 24 at 10:45 AM.

NEW: Sleep In Heavenly Peace Bed Build: May 30, 7 AM, at the Florence YMCA. Rob Martin will be out of town, but anyone interested can show up that morning and lend a hand to help area kids!

Special Session 2026! We will collect cabin supplies in May AND provide Happy Hour refreshments for Special Session campers on Wednesday, June 3 at Camp McDowell. Special Session is an overnight camp for special needs adults. Organized by Janet Port. More info to come!

Annual Yard Sale for Outreach: Saturday June 6 at Grace. Donation ingathering will begin Sunday, May 31.

Grace Night in June: All-parish potluck on Sunday, June 7, at 5:30 PM. Bring a side, main, or dessert – whatever you prefer! The church will provide bread and drinks. Questions or want to help set up/take down? Contact Linda Joly or Laurie Gray!

Grace Notes Music Ministry: An all-talents-all-instruments-inclusive group to spread music throughout our larger community.

Centering Prayer! A traditional form of Christian contemplative prayer.

Grace Groups! Please sign up for this summer's 10-week small group series.

OFFICE SCHEDULE 5/18 - 5/31

During the last two weeks of May, we are juggling some vacation days, a national holiday, and clergy continuing ed. Text (or call) Danielle's cell phone if you need assistance, as the church phone & office door may not always be monitored during our customary office hours. (931)636-1898

