

Grace Episcopal Church

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

The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

July 12, 2026 9:30 AM

Holy Eucharist



Interpreting This Week's Prayer

Collect of the Day: *O Lord, mercifully receive the prayers of your people who call upon you, and grant that they may know and understand what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to accomplish them; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

Dear God: I ask this week that you listen not only to me, but that you receive the cries of everyone who reaches out for you – whether they know who they are reaching out for, or not. Have a heart for our blindness, our confusion, and our lack of courage and consistency. Send us your Holy Spirit to help us see clearly and to bravely follow through once we know what you want us to do. I love you and I pray to you in Jesus' Holy Name. Amen.



GRACE
EPISCOPAL CHURCH + SHEFFIELD, ALABAMA

Prelude

Processional Hymn 8

Morning has broken

THE WORD OF GOD

Celebrant Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People *And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.*

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 S 280

Gloria in excelsis

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father
We worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father
Lord God, Lamb of God
You take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us
You are seated at the right hand of the Father
Receive our prayer
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord
You alone are the Most High
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit
In the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect of the Day

O Lord, mercifully receive the prayers of your people who call upon you, and grant that they may know and understand what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to accomplish them; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

The First Lesson

Genesis 25:19-34

This is not the first time—and it won't be the last—that a brother fight takes center stage in the Bible! Esau and Jacob will eventually reconcile in a touching encounter found in Genesis 33. However, Esau's descendants (the Edomites) and Jacob's descendants (the Israelites), will remain enemies for generations.

These are the descendants of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, sister of Laban the Aramean. Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord granted his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived. The children struggled together within her; and she said, "If it is to be this way, why do I live?" So she went to inquire of the Lord. And the Lord said to her,

"Two nations are in your womb,
and two peoples born of you shall be divided;
the one shall be stronger than the other,
the elder shall serve the younger."

When her time to give birth was at hand, there were twins in her womb. The first came out red, all his body like a hairy mantle; so they named him Esau. Afterward his brother came out, with his hand gripping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them.

When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, living in tents. Isaac loved Esau, because he was fond of game; but Rebekah loved Jacob.

Once when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was famished. Esau said to Jacob, "Let me eat some of that red stuff, for I am famished!" (Therefore he was called Edom.) Jacob said, "First sell me your birthright." Esau said, "I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?" Jacob said, "Swear to me first." So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank, and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

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

Psalm 119:105-112 *Lucerna pedibus meis*

Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible. In it, the psalmist praises Holy Scripture over and over again and commends the practical benefits of following God's Law. It is unclear (to your rector, at least) why this psalm was chosen as a response to the First Lesson today – particularly as there is no Law for Isaac and Rebekah's sons to follow yet (that comes later, with Moses). And, because it's not clear that either brother acts with great virtue in this story! If you have any ideas, please share.

105 Your word is a lantern to my feet *
and a light upon my path.

106 I have sworn and am determined *
to keep your righteous judgments.

107 I am deeply troubled; *
preserve my life, O Lord, according to your word.

108 Accept, O Lord, the willing tribute of my lips, *
and teach me your judgments.

109 My life is always in my hand, *
yet I do not forget your law.

110 The wicked have set a trap for me, *
but I have not strayed from your commandments.

111 Your decrees are my inheritance for ever; *
truly, they are the joy of my heart.

112 I have applied my heart to fulfill your statutes *
for ever and to the end.

The Second Lesson

Romans 8:1-11

This is one of the most important things to understand when you are reading Paul: “flesh” does not equal “body” and “Spirit” does not equal “soul”! The human self can’t be divided up into distinct compartments like that, which was a Modernist assumption that contemporary physicians, philosophers, and theologians are finally attempting to address. So, what do flesh and Spirit mean for Paul? You can think of flesh as your survival instinct, as well as your drive for pleasure. If I live totally according to the flesh, I put my own good above all else and I select for pleasure, no matter the cost to others. The Spirit is easy to define, in these verses, at least: Paul is writing here about the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ whom Jesus sent to us as a way for him to be with and in us always.

There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law-- indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

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

Gospel Hymn

Seek ye first

Please sing vss 1 & 2 before the Gospel.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God
And His righteousness
And all these things shall be added unto you
Allelu, Alleluia
Refrain: Alleluia, alleluia
Alleluia, allelu, alleluia

Ask and it shall be given unto you
Seek and ye shall find
Knock and it shall be opened unto you
Allelu, Alleluia
Refrain

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

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Matthew 13:1-9,18-23

I know what you're thinking: how did all of those people HEAR Jesus, who was way out on a boat with no microphone? Along the Sea of Galilee to this day you will find a place called "The Cove of the Sower." There, the shore and hills form a natural amphitheater where supposedly 4000 people can be addressed with no artificial amplification. Just another reason to hold outdoor church!

Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!"

"Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Gospel Hymn

Seek ye first
Please sing vs 3 after the Gospel.

We shall not live by bread alone
But by ev'ry word
That proceeds from the mouth of God
Allelu, alleluia
Refrain

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; Richard, our Bishop; 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

Charlan, Everett, David, Lily, Michael, Bennie, Robin, Wayne, Tommy B, LaVera, Peter, Doug, Courtney, Bruce, Frances, Betty, Dan, Ro, Heather, Gail, Deborah, Jessica, George, Jacquelyn, & Pamela.

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:
Chris Earl, Dee & Jennifer Black, & Beth & Eric Kimbrell.

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

Almighty and eternal God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth: Mercifully accept the prayers of your people, and strengthen us to do your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Confession of Sins

The Deacon says
Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept

Minister and People
Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.

The priest stands and says

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. *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

Instruments of Peace

*Lord make us instruments of Your peace
Where there is hatred let Your love increase
Lord make us instruments of Your peace
Walls of pride and prejudice shall cease
When we are Your instruments of peace*

Where there is hatred we will sow His love
Where there is injury we will never judge
Where there is striving we will speak His peace
To the people crying for release
We will be His instruments of peace

Where there is blindness we will pray for sight
Where there is darkness we will shine His light
Where there is sadness we will bear their grief
To the millions crying for release
We will be His instruments of peace

Doxology Hymn 380

Old 100th

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

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.

For you are the source of light and life, you made us in your image, and called us to new life in Jesus Christ our Lord.

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-129

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might

Heaven and earth are full of your glory

Hosanna in the highest

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord

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 333 Now the silence, Now the peace

Now the silence Now the peace
Now the empty hands uplifted
Now the kneeling Now the plea
Now the Father's arms in welcome
Now the hearing Now the power
Now the vessel brimmed for pouring
Now the Body Now the Blood
Now the joyful celebration
Now the wedding Now the songs
Now the heart forgiven leaping
Now the Spirit's visitation
Now the Son's epiphany
Now the Father's blessing Now Now Now

Postcommunion Prayer

The Celebrant and People continue

Eternal God, heavenly Father,
you have graciously accepted us as living members
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
and you have fed us with spiritual food
in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.
Send us now into the world in peace,
and grant us strength and courage
to love and serve you
with gladness and singleness of heart;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing

Recessional Hymn 597

O day of peace

Dismissal

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

Servants Today - July 12

VOD
Kris Walls

Safety
Brent Scott

Greeter
Janet Klas

Usher
Heidi Vacik

Reader
Hunter Ennis

Acolytes
MJ Robinson
& Luci Vacik

Chalice
Kelley Williams
& Luci Vacik

Server
Dennis Cole

Cross
David Springer

Altar Guild

Mary Holland Black, Jan Bennett, Annie Laurie Gray, Rita Kelly, & Jessie Wilson

Fellowship

Potluck Snacks Sunday

The altar flowers are given today to the glory of God, and in thanksgiving and honor of Barbara Sherrill for being my altar guild mentor for 20 years.

- Mary Cecelia Youngblood

**Danielle, our priest, and Josh, our deacon, would love to hear from you!
Please do not hesitate to contact either or both of them!**

Danielle Thompson: 931-636-4898 THOMDL80@gmail.com

Josh Vacik: 256-740-1255 JVICIK@comcast.net

Grace Church Vestry 2028

Lisa Gardner
Annie Laurie Gray
Jerry Shea - Senior Warden

Dennis Cole
David McKinley - Junior Warden
Janet Fort - Treasurer

Chris Earl
Kris Walls
Troy Youngblood

Darrell Todd- Clerk

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The Reverend Danielle Thompson, **Rector**

The Reverend Josh Vacik, **Deacon**

Parish Musician: Christa Belue Byrd

Organist: Nancy Hughes Bolte

Bookkeeper: Gayle Ozbirn

Parish Administrator: Lane Hardison Ennis

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY, JULY 12

Worship: 9:30 AM Holy Eucharist

Connect: Fellowship in the Parish Hall

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

THIS WEEK AT GRACE:

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY - MONDAY AT 8 AM (PARISH HALL)

LEARN TO PLAY BRIDGE - TUESDAY AT 10 AM (PARISH HALL)

GRACE GROUP 1 - WEDNESDAY AT 4 PM (PARISH HOUSE)

GRACE GROUPS 2 & 3 - WEDNESDAY AT 6 PM (PARISH HOUSE)

CHOIR - WEDNESDAY AT 6 PM (NAVE)

GRACE NOTES OPEN JAM SESSION - THURSDAY AT 3:45 PM (PARISH HALL)

CENTERING PRAYER - THURSDAY AT 5:15 PM (PARISH HOUSE)

***ALL GROUPS ARE "ROLLING ADMISSION" AND CAN BE JOINED AT ANY TIME!
CONTACT LANE OR DANIELLE AND WE WILL PUT YOU IN TOUCH
WITH A GROUP LEADER!***

HANDY FEST ... TIMES TWO!

Wednesday July 22: **Grace 2.0** (formerly A Taste of Grace), 6:00 pm in the church

Sunday July 26: **Unending Praise** 5th Anniversary Concert, 6:00 pm in the church

SAVE THE DATES

Saturday, Sept 19: **Centering Prayer Workshop at Grace**, facilitated by Contemplative Outreach, Birmingham. Open to the public! 9 AM - 12 PM

Friday, Nov 6 - Sunday, Nov 8: **Shoals Parish Retreat at Camp McDowell!** A weekend of fun with our friends from Trinity and St. Bart's.

SCAN ME



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