

Grace Episcopal Church

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

The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

July 19, 2026 9:30 AM

Holy Eucharist



Interpreting This Week's Prayer

Collect of the Day: *Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom, you know our necessities before we ask and our ignorance in asking: Have compassion on our weakness, and mercifully give us those things which for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask; through the worthiness of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

Dear God: You know what I want. More importantly, you know what I need, even when I can't see the truth of my own situation. Please continue, Lord, to listen past my groping words in order to seek out the prayer within my prayer – the prayer your Holy Spirit is offering to you in me. It is thanks to Jesus that I have your Spirit, which connects me back to you in an unbroken relationship where I am more than worthy of compassion, mercy, and love. In His Holy Name I offer this prayer. Amen.



GRACE
EPISCOPAL CHURCH + SHEFFIELD, ALABAMA

Prelude

Processional Hymn 372 Praise to the living God

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

Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom, you know our necessities before we ask and our ignorance in asking: Have compassion on our weakness, and mercifully give us those things which for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask; through the worthiness of your Son 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 28:10-19a

Let's revisit the family tree: Abraham had two sons, Ishmael and Isaac. Isaac married Rebekah and they had twins, Esau and Jacob. Last week, we heard how Jacob, the younger twin, tricked Esau into giving his right of inheritance to Jacob. Understandably angered, Esau plots to kill Jacob. The boys' mother overhears him and sends Jacob away from their home in the Negev (a desert that covers the southern half of modern-day Israel) to her hometown in modern-day Syria in order to find a wife. Jacob's encounter with God at Beth-el ("house of God") occurs just after he has set out on this journey, which will end up taking him many years to complete.

Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the Lord stood beside him and said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!" And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called that place Bethel.

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

Psalm 139:1-11, 22-23 *Domine, probasti*

This is a favorite psalm. It celebrates the value of every human life by describing how God sees us and has a hand in our growth and development from the time we are conceived. It also depicts God's faithfulness as he follows us everywhere we go, even into the darkest places. This psalm complements the First Lesson because it reminds us how God has been faithful to the members of Abraham's family (here, Jacob). It also speaks of climbing up to heaven (v. 7), which reminds us of the "ladder" Jacob sees in Genesis 28.

- 1 Lord, you have searched me out and known me; *
 you know my sitting down and my rising up;
 you discern my thoughts from afar.
- 2 You trace my journeys and my resting-places *
 and are acquainted with all my ways.
- 3 Indeed, there is not a word on my lips, *
 but you, O Lord, know it altogether.
- 4 You press upon me behind and before *
 and lay your hand upon me.
- 5 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; *
 it is so high that I cannot attain to it.
- 6 Where can I go then from your Spirit? *
 where can I flee from your presence?
- 7 If I climb up to heaven, you are there; *
 if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.
- 8 If I take the wings of the morning *
 and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
- 9 Even there your hand will lead me *
 and your right hand hold me fast.
- 10 If I say, "Surely the darkness will cover me, *
 and the light around me turn to night,"
- 11 Darkness is not dark to you;
 the night is as bright as the day; *
 darkness and light to you are both alike.
- 22 Search me out, O God, and know my heart; *
 try me and know my restless thoughts.
- 23 Look well whether there be any wickedness in me *
 and lead me in the way that is everlasting.

The Second Lesson

Romans 8:12-25

Fancy words that describe what Paul is doing in this passage are “pneumatology” (how does the Holy Spirit work?) and “eschatology” (where is everything headed?). First, Paul expands on what it means for us to have the Spirit of Christ: it means we have a spirit of adoption, which makes it possible for us to inherit—fully inhabit—our Father’s kingdom. Second, Paul suggests that we’re still waiting on something: “the redemption of our bodies,” or salvation in its fullest, realized sense. Touchingly, we’re not the only ones waiting. The whole creation (ktisis, the material world) is waiting on us to receive this gift and for God to be all in all.

Brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh-- for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ-- if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

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 13:24-30,36-43

Like last week, gardeners will understand this parable! Pulling weeds can be dangerous business: you can hurt the roots of your intended plants; you can cause weeds to spread; and sometimes, as is likely the case in this parable, it's really hard to tell which plant is the weed and which is the true stalk of grain. Among other lessons, this parable suggests to us that judging another person's soul is "above our pay grade" – thanks be to God! It also includes a subtle warning – a plant that looks from the outside like a perfect specimen of wheat may not be as it appears.

Jesus put before the crowd another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?' He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' But he replied, 'No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!"

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

Elijah, Reagan, Penney, The Booth Family, Suzy, 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

Taylor, Johnathan, Ben, Conner, John Gage, Nathan, Henry, Jacob, Kadin, Dustin, Rebekah, Bryan, & William.

Hear us, Lord;

For your mercy is great.

We pray for those celebrating birthdays or anniversaries:
Mary Cecelia & Troy Youngblood, Caroline Heaton, Richard Parker, Brandy Springer, & Sam Brentnall.

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

I Stand in Awe

When I consider what you have made
The mighty oceans, the fiery stars
The fields and forest give you praise
My Lord, my God

I stand in awe
I stand in awe
I stand in awe of you

When I consider what you have done
I see your suffering, I see your scars
Oh, the wonder and, oh, the love
My Lord, my God

All glory, all honor
All worship and all praise
All blessing, all power
How worthy is your name

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 588 Almighty God, your word is cast

Almighty God, your word is cast like seed upon the ground
Now let the dew of heaven descend and righteous fruits abound

Let not our selfishness and hate this holy seed remove
But give it root in every heart to bring forth fruits of love

Let not the world's deceitful cares the rising plant destroy
But let it yield a hundred-fold the fruits of peace and joy

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 453 As Jacob with travel was weary one day

Dismissal

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

Servants Today – July 19

VOD
Kris Walls

Safety
Rob Martin

Greeter
Rob, Barney, &
Colby Martin

Usher
Amy Daniel

Reader
Jen Awwad

Acolytes
Kris Walls
& Jen Davis

Chalice
Patti Thorne
& Kris Walls

Server
John Walls

Cross
Joshua Davis

Altar Guild

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

Fellowship

Vicky & Chris Earl

**The altar flowers are given today by Jerry Shea
to the glory of God, and in thanksgiving of the ministries of Danielle, Josh,
Christa, and Nancy, and in honor of his mom's birthday yesterday (7/18).**

**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	JVACIK@comcast.net

Grace Church Vestry 2026

Lisa Gardner
Annie Laurie Gray
Jerry Shea – Senior Warden

Dennis Cole
David McKinley – Junior Warden
Janet Port – Treasurer
Darrell Todd – Clerk

Chris Earl
Kris Walls
Troy Youngblood

Grace Episcopal Church

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The Reverend Danielle Thompson, **Rector**

The Reverend Josh Vacik, **Deacon**

Parish Musician: Christa Belue Byrd

Organist: Nancy Hughes Balte

Bookkeeper: Gayle Ozblin

Parish Administrator: Lane Hardison Ennis

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY, JULY 19

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 2.0 – WEDNESDAY AT 6 PM (NAVE): CONCERT OF PRAISE

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

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

UNENDING PRAISE 5TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT SUNDAY AT 6 PM (NAVE):
MULTI-CHOIR EXTRAVAGANZA!

***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!***

GRACE NIGHT RETURNS!

An easy-breezy monthly potluck dinner.
Bring whatever you want to eat or whatever you like to make – no need to sign up.
Dinner starts at 5:30 on Sunday, August 16.

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. *Sign ups begin August 1!!!*

SCAN ME



Save our church website QR code!

Our church website is easily found using this QR code! Please save a picture of the QR code so you can share it with others.

How do I use a QR code?

Simply open your camera app, point it at the QR code, and tap the link that appears.