

Grace Episcopal Church

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

The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 23, 2026 9:30 AM

Holy Eucharist



Interpreting This Week's Prayer

Collect of the Day: *Grant, O merciful God, that your Church, being gathered together in unity by your Holy Spirit, may show forth your power among all peoples, to the glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

Dear God: When people look to your Church, they are looking for Jesus. They want to be reminded of him and feel his presence through the words and deeds of those who identify with his Name. Yet sometimes—maybe too often—it is hard to find Jesus among the members of his Body. Send us your Holy Spirit, God, to unify us as people of faith, to fill our hearts with compassion for the least of these, and to reveal the image of Jesus to all who are looking for him. In His Name I offer this prayer. Amen.



GRACE
EPISCOPAL CHURCH + SHEFFIELD, ALABAMA

Prelude

Processional Hymn 362

Holy, holy, holy!

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 376 vs 1 & 2 Joyful, joyful, we adore thee

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love
Hearts unfold like flowers before thee, praising thee, their sun above
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; drive the dark of doubt away
Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day

All thy works with joy surround thee, earth and heaven reflect thy rays
Stars and angels sing around thee, center of unbroken praise
Field and forest, vale and mountain, blooming meadow, flashing sea
Chanting bird and flowing fountain, call us to rejoice in thee

Collect of the Day

Grant, O merciful God, that your Church, being gathered together in unity by your Holy Spirit, may show forth your power among all peoples, to the glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The First Lesson

Exodus 1:8-2:10

Guess what – you just finished reading Genesis! All summer, we explored important episodes from the lives of Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. Last week, the Genesis cycle concluded: Jacob's estranged sons reconciled with one another in Egypt, then relocated there due to a famine. As today's reading from a new book, Exodus, explains, once Joseph's influence in the Egyptian court was forgotten, his descendants became slaves – as did other groups living under Pharaoh (for some unsettling details, read Genesis 47:13-27). For Christians, the story of Moses' birth foreshadows the story of Jesus' birth, particularly Matthew 2:1-19.

Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, “Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land.” Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, “When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live.” But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?” The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them.” So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, “Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live.”

Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him three months. When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him, “This must be one of the Hebrews’ children,” she said. Then his sister said to Pharaoh’s daughter, “Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?” Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Yes.” So the girl went and called the child’s mother. Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages.” So the woman took the child and nursed it. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, “because,” she said, “I drew him out of the water.”

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

Psalm 124 *Nisi quia Dominus*

This psalm can refer to multiple instances of salvation in Israel’s relationship with God. Moses’ birth leads to one of God’s saving acts – his deliverance of the Hebrew people from slavery. Again, Christians can hear references to Jesus, God’s ultimate salvation, in these verses.

- 1 If the Lord had not been on our side, *
 let Israel now say;
- 2 If the Lord had not been on our side, *
 when enemies rose up against us;
- 3 Then would they have swallowed us up alive *
 in their fierce anger toward us;
- 4 Then would the waters have overwhelmed us *
 and the torrent gone over us;
- 5 Then would the raging waters *
 have gone right over us.
- 6 Blessed be the Lord! *
 he has not given us over to be a prey for their teeth.
- 7 We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowler; *
 the snare is broken, and we have escaped.
- 8 Our help is in the Name of the Lord, *
 the maker of heaven and earth.

The Second Lesson

Romans 12:1-8

In Ch. 12 of this letter, Paul sets aside his theological reflections on Jews and Gentiles in order to call all people of faith to ethical behavior. He also discusses the Body of Christ and spiritual gifts, both topics he works out in more detail in 1 Corinthians 12:1-31 (while you're at it, go ahead and read 1 Corinthians 13, too – you'll LOVE it).

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God-- what is good and acceptable and perfect.

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

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

Gospel Hymn 488

Be thou my vision

Please sing vss 1 & 2 before the Gospel.

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart
All else be nought to me, save that thou art
Thou my best thought, by day or by night
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light

Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord
Thou my great Father; thine own may I be
Thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee

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

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Matthew 16:13-20

Caesarea Philippi is about as far north as Jesus goes in his ministry. It is also a luxury resort town famous for hedonistic pastimes and pagan rituals, and it is mostly Gentile. In short, it's kind of a weird place for Peter to make a confession of faith in Jesus. Binding and loosing refers to decision-making and interpretation of Scripture – not to absolution/forgiveness (at least, not exclusively). From this moment on in Matthew, Jesus will begin to head south toward Jerusalem.

When Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Gospel Hymn 488

Be thou my vision

Please sing vs 3 after the Gospel.

High King of heaven, when victory is won
May I reach heaven's joys, bright heaven's Sun
Heart of my heart, whatever befall
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all

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, Betty, Dan, Ro, Heather, Gail, Jessica, George, Jacquelyn, Pamela, Doug, Charles, Dennis, Eric, & Larry.

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, and William.

Hear us, Lord;

For your mercy is great.

We pray for those celebrating birthdays or anniversaries:

William "Bill" H. Heaton, Paula Brentnall, Lila Williams, Graham Fox, Grace & Graham Fox, & Jane Tinkham.

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 Hymn 680 O God our help in ages past

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come
Our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home

Under the shadow of thy throne thy saints have dwelt secure
Sufficient is thine arm alone, and our defense is sure

Before the hills in order stood, or earth received her frame
From everlasting thou art God, to endless years the same

A thousand ages in thy sight are like an evening gone
Short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun

Time, like an ever-rolling stream, bears all our years away
They fly, forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come
Be thou our guide while life shall last, and our eternal home

Doxology Hymn 377

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

Land of Rest

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 341 For the bread which you have broken

For the bread which you have broken
For the wine which you have poured
For the words which you have spoken
Now we give you thanks, O Lord

By this pledge, Lord, that you love us
By your gift of peace restored
By your call to heaven above us
Hallow all our lives, O Lord

As our blessed ones adore you
Seated at our Father's board
May the Church still waiting for you
Keep love's tie unbroken, Lord

In your service, Lord, defend us
In our hearts keep watch and ward
In the world to which you send us
Let your kingdom come, O Lord

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 490 I want to walk as a child of the light

I want to walk as a child of the light
I want to follow Jesus
God set the stars to give light to the world
The star of my life is Jesus

*Refrain: In him there is no darkness at all
The night and the day are both alike
The Lamb is the light of the city of God
Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus*

I want to see the brightness of God
I want to look at Jesus
Clear sun of righteousness, shine on my path
And show me the way to the Father
Refrain

I'm looking for the coming of Christ
I want to be with Jesus
When we have run with patience the race
We shall know the joy of Jesus
Refrain

Dismissal

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

Servants Today – August 23

VOD

David McKinley

Safety

Mike Williams

Greeter

Mary Ann & Bob Allen

Usher

Heidi Vacik

Reader

Kelley Williams

Acolytes

Lisa Gardner
& Morgan
Robinson

Chalice

David Springer
& Kelley Williams

Server

Bob Allen

Cross

David Springer

Altar Guild

Mary Cocella Youngblood, Jodi McDaniel, Beth Scott, & Debbie Thompson

Fellowship

Potluck Snack Leftovers

The altar flowers are given to the glory of God.

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

831-836-4898

THOMDL80@gmail.com

Grace Church Vestry 2026

Lisa Gardner
Annie Laurie Gray
Jerry Shea – Senior Warden

Chris Earl
Kris Walls
Troy Youngblood

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

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 Bolte

Bookkeeper: Gayle Ozbim

Parish Administrator: Lane Hardison Ennis

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 GROUPS – WEDNESDAY AT 4 PM & 6 PM

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!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

REMEMBERING JANE COLE & GRACE NIGHT

Grace will host the burial office for Jane Evans Cole this afternoon, August 23, at 3:00 PM in the church.

Grace Night, our monthly potluck dinner, will be held in Jane's honor following the service. Bring a dish to share (anything you like) and a heart full of hospitality and joy.
Dinner at approximately 4:15 PM on Sunday, August 23.

SHOALS SHELTER SUMMER COOL-DOWN DAYS

We are hosting 10-15 guest from Shoals Shelter from 12p - 4p in the Parish Hall on upcoming Thursdays:

August 27: Ellen Black provides lunch (256)443-6621
September 10: Bunny Willard provides lunch (256)762-0987
September 24: OPEN

If you can help one of the above lunch hosts, reach out to them by text or call! If you can provide lunch on 9/10, let Danielle or Lane know!

FALL PREVIEW

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

Sunday, October 4: The Great Episcopal Picnic, hosted by St. Bart's. 10:30 AM

Sunday, October 18: Pet Blessing AND Grace Night. A combo platter of fun in our pavilion!

Sunday, Nov 1: All Saints' Evening Prayer at Historic St. John's in Tusculumbia at 3:30 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.