

Grace Episcopal Church

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



***The Twenty-First Sunday
after Pentecost***

***October 18, 2026
9:30 AM***

Holy Eucharist

Interpreting This Week's Prayer



Collect of the Day: *Almighty and everlasting God, in Christ you have revealed your glory among the nations: Preserve the works of your mercy, that your Church throughout the world may persevere with steadfast faith in the confession 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: In Christ, you showed yourself to be a merciful God who heals the sick, feeds the hungry, and overcomes darkness with light. As followers of Christ, you call us to perform these same works of mercy. Give us your Holy Spirit to preserve these works among us, so that we can faithfully, and with integrity, bear his Name. And, so that people everywhere will know who you truly are. In Jesus' Name I offer this prayer. Amen.

Prelude

Processional Hymn 391 Before the Lord's eternal throne

Before the Lord's eternal throne, ye nations, bow with sacred joy
Know that the Lord is God alone; he can create, and he destroy

His sovereign power without our aid formed us of clay and gave us breath
And when like wandering sheep we strayed, he saved us from the power of death

We are his people, we his care, our souls, and all our mortal frame
What lasting honors shall we rear, almighty Maker, to thy Name?

We'll crowd thy gates with thankful songs, high as the heaven our voices raise
And earth, with her ten thousand tongues, shall fill thy courts with sounding praise

Wide as the world is thy command, vast as eternity thy love
Firm as a rock thy truth must stand, when rolling years shall cease to move

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

Almighty and everlasting God, in Christ you have revealed your glory among the nations: Preserve the works of your mercy, that your Church throughout the world may persevere with steadfast faith in the confession 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 33:12-23

Last week, we read about the Golden Calf. In a nutshell, God delivered the Israelites from slavery, fed them, and gave them water to drink. He forgave them every time they complained against him – in fact, God never even seemed to bothered by their complaining (at least not as much as Moses was)! Then, craving further security, the Israelites fashioned a cow out of gold and began to worship it. In response, God tells Moses that he is releasing the people: they can do whatever they want to do and go wherever they want to go. However, God won't be going with them. In the verses below, Moses – who is also furious at the Israelites – begs God to reconsider this plan.

Moses said to the Lord, “See, you have said to me, ‘Bring up this people’; but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.’ Now if I have found favor in your sight, show me your ways, so that I may know you and find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people.” He said, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” And he said to him, “If your presence will not go, do not carry us up from here. For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people, unless you go with us? In this way, we shall be distinct, I and your people, from every people on the face of the earth.”

The Lord said to Moses, “I will do the very thing that you have asked; for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name.” Moses said, “Show me your glory, I pray.” And he said, “I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you the name, ‘The Lord’; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. But,” he said, “you cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live.” And the Lord continued, “See, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock; and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen.”

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

Psalm 99 *Dominus regnavit*

This psalm contains lots of information about where God is (upon the cherubim, high above the people, in a pillar of cloud, upon his holy hill). But, it never mentions what God looks like, nor does it pin him down to one location.

- 1 The Lord is King;
 let the people tremble; *
 he is enthroned upon the cherubim;
 let the earth shake.
- 2 The Lord is great in Zion; *
 he is high above all peoples.
- 3 Let them confess his Name, which is great and awesome; *
 he is the Holy One.
- 4 "O mighty King, lover of justice,
 you have established equity; *
 you have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob."
- 5 Proclaim the greatness of the Lord our God
 and fall down before his footstool; *
 he is the Holy One.
- 6 Moses and Aaron among his priests,
 and Samuel among those who call upon his Name, *
 they called upon the Lord, and he answered them.
- 7 He spoke to them out of the pillar of cloud; *
 they kept his testimonies and the decree that he gave them.
- 8 O Lord our God, you answered them indeed; *
 you were a God who forgave them,
 yet punished them for their evil deeds.
- 9 Proclaim the greatness of the Lord our God
 and worship him upon his holy hill; *
 for the Lord our God is the Holy One.

The Second Lesson

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Like Philippians, which we finished reading last week, Thessalonians is one of Paul's "happy" letters. In it, we sense that the brand new church in Thessalonica is trying hard to take care of one another and draw close to God. Paul has genuine affection for them. Major themes of this letter are faith, hope, and love as well as dealing with grief and persecution.

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace.

We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead-- Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

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 22:15-22

Jesus has a way of making people on both sides of an argument go, “Huh?” Jesus’ answer to the Pharisees and Saducees’ question about taxes is a clever sidestep out of the trap they are setting for him. His answer also turns the question back on its askers, forcing them to decide for themselves between what belongs to Caesar, “Son of Divine Augustus,” and what belongs to God, Creator of Heaven and Earth. Finally, Jesus’ answer calls into question the actual power – not to mention the reality – of Caesar’s “things” (money, violence, etc).

The Pharisees went and plotted to entrap Jesus in what he said. So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and whose title?” They answered, “The emperor’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

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 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, Betty, Dan, Ro, Jessica, George, Charles, Eric, Larry, Alex, Bitty, Jack, Marcia, and Jimmy.

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, Nathan, Conner, John Gage, Henry, Jacob, Kadin, Dustin, Rebekah, Bryan, and William.

Hear us, Lord;

For your mercy is great.

We pray for those celebrating birthdays or anniversaries:
April & Will Conrad, Danny Hovater, Patrick Underwood, and Janet Klas

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 Am Not Alone

Barry Rickard, tenor

When I walk through deep waters, I know that you will be with me
When I'm standing in the fire, I will not be overcome
Through the valley of the shadow, I will not fear

*I am not alone, I am not alone
You will go before me, You will never leave me*

In the midst of deep sorrow, I see Your light is breaking through
The dark of night will not overtake me; I am pressing into You
Lord You fight my every battle; I will not fear

You amaze me, redeem me
You call me as Your own

You're my strength, You're my defender, You're my refuge in the storm
Through these trials You've always been faithful, You bring healing to my soul

Doxology Hymn

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

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. 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 684 O for a closer walk with God

O for a closer walk with God, a calm and heavenly frame
A light to shine upon the road that leads me to the Lamb

Where is the blessedness I knew when first I saw the Lord
Where is the soul refreshing view of Jesus and his word

Return, O holy Dove, return, sweet messenger of rest
I hate the sins that made thee mourn, and drove thee from my breast

The dearest idol I have known, whate'er that idol be
Help me to tear it from thy throne, and worship only thee

So shall my walk be close with God, calm and serene my frame
So purer light shall mark the road that leads me to the lamb

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 665 All my hope on God is founded

All my hope on God is founded; he doth still my trust renew
Me through change and chance he guideth, only good and only true
God unknown, he alone calls my heart to be his own

Mortal pride and earthly glory, sword and crown betray our trust
Though with care and toil we build them, tower and temple fall to dust
But God's power, hour by hour, is my temple and my tower

God's great goodness e'er endureth, deep his wisdom passing thought
Splendor, light, and life attend him, beauty springeth out of nought
Evermore from his store newborn worlds rise and adore

Daily doth the almighty giver bounteous gifts on us bestow
His desire our soul delighteth, pleasure leads us where we go
Love doth stand at his hand; joy doth wait on his command

Still from earth to God eternal sacrifice of praise be done
High above all praises praising for the gift of Christ, his Son
Christ doth call one and all: ye who follow shall not fall

Dismissal

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

Servants Today - October 18

VOD

Janet Port

SAFETY

Richard Parker

GREETERS

Janet Klas

USHER

Fred Joly

READER

Hunter Ennis

ACOLYTESJern Davis
& TBD**CHALICE**Bob Allan
& Patti Thorne**SERVER**

Bob Allan

CROSS

Joshua Davis

ALTAR GUILD

Laurie Gray & Tana Andrews

FELLOWSHIP

Laurie Gray & Linda Joly

The altar flowers are given today by Tana Andrews
to the glory of God and in honor of her three sons: Jake, Josh and Jeremy Andrews.

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

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

Rev. Josh Vacik: 256-740-1255 JVCICK@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

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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

This Week at Grace:

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

HOPE & GRACE OPEN RECOVERY GROUP – MONDAY AT 6 PM

LEARN TO PLAY BRIDGE – TUESDAY AT 11 AM (PARISH HALL)

GRACE CHOIR REHEARSAL – WEDNESDAY AT 6 PM (NAVE)

GRACE GROUPS – WED AT 4 PM (GROUP 1) AND 6 PM (GROUPS 2 & 3) (PARISH HALL)

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

CENTERING PRAYER – THURSDAY AT 5:15 PM (NAVE)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Community Pet Blessing and Grace Night: TODAY!

October 18 at 4 PM Pet Blessing, followed by hot dogs and fixings at 4:30 PM! Bring a dessert, a dog, or both!

Due this week (Oct 23): Parish Retreat Fees!

Not sure how to pay or what you owe? Contact Lane by email:
gracesheffieldoffice@gmail.com

All Saints' at Grace and St. John's: 9:30 AM Holy Eucharist at Grace, followed by a traditional community service of Evening Prayer at 3:00 PM at Historic St. John's. Sunday, Nov 1.

Cursillo #241 Welcome Back: 6:00 PM on Tuesday, Nov 10 at Deacon Catherine's house: 314 Sherborne Court, Florence

Santa for a Senior: Grab a bag in the Parish Hall to fill with Christmas goodies for our local Seniors! Items to purchase are listed on the bags. Return your filled bag to the church by November 15!

Safeplace Volunteer Training: Grace is helping Safeplace rebuild its volunteer corps by hosting an area-wide training. Interested in learning how you can help women and children escaping domestic abuse? Join us in the Parish Hall on Thursday, Nov 21 at 6 PM.

Shelter Season is Coming! The Shoals Shelter winter season calendar has just been released! Grace will host five dates: 12/10, 1/7, 1/28, 2/18, and 3/11.

SCAN ME



Save our church website QR code!

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