Grace Episcopal Church

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



The Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

November 15, 2026
9:30 AM

Holy Eucharist

GRACE
EPISCOPAL CHURCH + SHEFFIELD, ALABAMA

Interpreting This Week's Prayer

Collect of the Day: *Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

Dear God: Sometimes the Bible feels like a mystery to me. What am I supposed to make of people whose world seems so unlike ours, whose names I can't even pronounce? What about preachers, scholars, and friends who read these books so differently from one another? Why haven't I seen with my own eyes the ocean split in half and departed loved ones brought back to life? And yet, sometimes the Bible feels so close. Sometimes its words reach across millennia to name what I am feeling, to offer insight when I am struggling, to nourish me on this journey of doubt and faith, a journey I share with all who have heard these verses before. Give me your Holy Spirit, God, so that whether the Bible should frustrate me or console me, it may always lead me to wisdom, feed my hope, and increase my trust in you. In Jesus' Name I offer this prayer. Amen.

Prelude

Processional Hymn 462 The Lord will come and not be slow

The Lord will come and not be slow, his footsteps cannot err
Before him righteousness shall go, his royal harbinger

Truth from the earth, like to a flower, shall bud and blossom show
And justice, from her heavenly bower, look down on us below

Rise, God, judge thou the earth in might, this wicked earth redress
For thou art he who shalt by right the nations all possess

The nations all whom thou hast made shall come, and all shall frame
To bow them low before thee, Lord, and glorify thy Name

For great thou art, and wonders great by thy stronghand are done
Thou in thy everlasting seat remainest God alone

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 618 vs 1 & 3 Ye watchers and ye holy ones

Ye watchers and ye holy ones, bright seraphs, cherubim, and thrones
Raise the glad strain, Alleluia!
Cry out, dominions, princedoms powers, virtues, archangels, angels' choirs
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Respond, ye souls in endless rest, ye patriarchs and prophets blest
Alleluia, alleluia!
Ye holy twelve, ye martyrs strong, all saints triumphant raise the song
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Collect of the Day

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The First Lesson **Judges 4:1-7**

This is it: the final lesson we will read in the chronological sequence of Old Testament stories we've explored for six months. From Genesis to this single selection from Judges, we have walked with Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and Joshua. Abraham's small family has become a nation of tribes, each led by a chieftain, or "judge." Why did the larger Church decide that, among all of the many judges, Deborah should be featured this week? Perhaps this selection is a nod to all women in the history of the Old Testament, whose influence is largely unrecorded.

The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, after Ehud died. So the Lord sold them into the hand of King Jabin of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor; the commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-ha-goiim. Then the Israelites cried out to the Lord for help; for he had nine hundred chariots of iron, and had oppressed the Israelites cruelly twenty years.

At that time Deborah, a prophetess, wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel. She used to sit under the palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim; and the Israelites came up to her for judgment. She sent and summoned Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali, and said to him, "The Lord, the God of Israel, commands you, 'Go, take position at Mount Tabor, bringing ten thousand from the tribe of Naphtali and the tribe of Zebulun. I will draw out Sisera, the general of Jabin's army, to meet you by the Wadi Kishon with his chariots and his troops; and I will give him into your hand.'"

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

Psalm 123 ***Ad te levavi oculos meos***

This psalm complements the Old Testament reading because it asks for God's help (mercy) in a situation of oppression.

1 To you I lift up my eyes, *
to you enthroned in the heavens.
2 As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters, *
and the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress,
3 So our eyes look to the Lord our God, *
until he show us his mercy.
4 Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy, *
for we have had more than enough of contempt,
5 Too much of the scorn of the indolent rich, *
and of the derision of the proud.

The Second Lesson **1 Thessalonians 5:1-11**

In Scripture, the Day of the Lord can refer to an ultimate event (such as the return of Christ). More often, it refers to an historical breaking point – a moment when it becomes impossible for a group of people to continue in ways of life that are opposed to God's will. Or, a day when evil undermines itself and corrupt people and institutions crumble; yet, when the dust settles, God's goodness endures.

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

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 25:14-30

This is the second of three parables that hang together in Matthew 25: The Wise and Foolish Bridesmaids (last week), The Talents (today), and The Sheep and the Goats (next Sunday). These parables have a few themes in common: waiting, faithfulness, and judgment. They are intended to help people, like us, who live with one foot in the new world and one foot in the old order to avoid complacency and to actively anticipate the fullness of God's Kingdom by living like Jesus now.

Jesus said, "It is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

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. We pray for all who have been elected to serve our nation and local communities: grant them wisdom, integrity, and a heart for the common good;
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, Jimmy, Mary, and Kyrie.

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:
Charlotte Kennamore, Jan Bennett, Charlotte Savage, Eddie Lakey, Kathryn Balch, Charlotte & John Savage, Dennis Cole, and Brent Scott.

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 *God Leads Us Along* **Grace Choir**

In shady green pastures
So rich and so sweet
God leads His dear children along
Where the water's cool flow
Bathes the weary one's feet
God leads His dear children along

Some thro' the waters
Some thro' the flood
Some thro' the fire
But all thro' the blood
Some thro' great sorrow
But God gives a song
In the night season
And all the day long

Sometimes on the mount
Where the sun shines so bright
God leads His dear children along
Sometimes in the valley
In darkest of night
God leads His dear children along

Though sorrows befall us
And Satan oppose
God leads His dear children along
Through grace we can conquer
Defeat all our foes
God leads His dear children along

Doxology Hymn 618 vs 4 O friends in gladness let us sing

O friends, in gladness let us sing, supernal anthems echoing
Alleluia, alleluia!
To God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit, Three in One
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

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

The Great Thanksgiving ***Eucharistic Prayer A***

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.
People: *And also with you.*
Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.
People: *We lift them to the Lord.*
Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: *It is right to give him thanks and praise.*

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

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

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 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

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 551 Rise up, ye saints of God

Rise up, ye saints of God! Have done with lesser things
Give heart and soul and mind and strength to serve the King of kings

Rise up, ye saints of God! His kingdom tarries long
Lord, bring the day of truth and love and end the night of wrong

Lift high the cross of Christ! Tread where his feet have trod
And quickened by the Spirit's power, rise up, ye saints of God

Dismissal

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

Servants Today - November 15

VOD
Jerry Shea

SAFETY
Graham Fox

GREETERS
Rob, Barney, & Colby Martin

USHER
Amy Daniel

READER
Scott Ciluffo

ACOLYTES
Morgan Robinson & George Youngblood

CHALICE
Bob Allan & George Youngblood

SERVER
Bob Allan

CROSS
Fred Joly

ALTAR GUILD
Mary Holland Black, Jan Bennett, Annie Laurie Gray, & Jessie Wilson

FELLOWSHIP
Pam & David McKinley and Jessie Wilson

The altar flowers are given today by Alice Maddox
To the glory of God, and in loving memory of
Robert G Mullen Jr. USN **James W Maddox, USAF**
Robert G Mullen Sr, USN **Edward G Mullen, USA**
And all who stood forth when our Country called

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	THOMDL8c@gmail.com
Rev. 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
103 Darby Avenue, PO Box 838
Sheffield, AL 35660

OFFICE: 256-383-2014
TEXT: 256-335-4546
EMAIL: GRACESHEFFIELDOFFICE@GMAIL.COM
WEBSITE: GRACEEPISCOPALSHEFFIELD.DIOALA.ORG

The Reverend Danielle Thompson, Rector
The Reverend Josh Vacik, Deacon

PARISH MUSICIAN: CHRISTA BELUE BYRD
ORGANIST: NANCY HUGHES BOLTE
BOOKKEEPER: GAYLE OZBIRN
PARISH ADMINISTRATOR: LANE HARDISON ENNIS

This Week at Grace:

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY - MONDAY AT 8 AM (PARISH HALL)
GRACE & HOPE OPEN RECOVERY GROUP – MONDAY AT 6 PM
LEARN TO PLAY BRIDGE - TUESDAY AT 11 AM
(CONTACT JAN BENNETT IF YOU ARE COMING FOR THE FIRST TIME!)
BUDGET & PROPERTY PRE-MEETING – WEDS AT 12 PM (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)

PROPOSED VESTRY SLATE

Based on your suggestions, the Nominating Committee and Vestry wish to recommend these three parishioners to be the Vestry Class of 2027 - 2029:

Graham Fox
David Klas
Alice Maddox

Short bios will be published on Thursday, Nov 19 in Anchor Lines. Please contact Danielle if you have questions. A yay/nay vote for this slate will be requested at the Annual Meeting on 11/29.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Santa for a Senior: Bags due today! Grab a bag in the Parish Hall to fill with Christmas goodies for our local Seniors! Items to purchase are listed on the bags.

Budget & Property PRE-MEETINGS: today and Wednesday! If you would like to discuss our 2027 parish budget and the status of our property in depth before the Annual Meeting, please attend one of these two pre-meetings: **Sun, Nov 15 at 11:15 AM** OR **Weds, Nov 18 at 12:00 PM**. Can't make it to either? Please contact Danielle to schedule a meeting with our money/property team. ***The Annual Meeting is Sunday, November 29.***

Thanksgiving Open House: Danielle and Josh host an open house on Thanksgiving Day every year from 1 PM – 7 PM. Come for the whole day *or* drop in whenever you like. If friends or family member do not have holiday plans, please share this information with them – the more the merrier. 210 N Sequoia Blvd, Florence.

Advent Quiet Day: The Shoals Trinity Daughters of the King and the Brotherhood of St. Andrew would like to invite everyone to join us for a Quiet Morning of reflection and meditation grounded in the teachings of Julian of Norwich. Saturday, December 5, 9am-12pm at Trinity Episcopal Church (410 N Pine St, Florence). All are welcome!

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!
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.