

GRACE NOTES

August/September 2026

Grace Presbyterian Church

Where All People Are Welcome Around the Table of God.



August/September 2026

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“Hymns and Hymnody: Reflections on Why We Sing”

By John-Peter S. Ford

“Above all, sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing him more than yourself, or any other creature.” – John Wesley

I’m not sure if I can remember the first hymn I ever learned to play, but I do think it was at my maternal grandparents’ house on their antique upright piano, which had once belonged to Aunt Ada. The story goes that my mother was beginning to take piano lessons, but didn’t have a piano, so Aunt Ada gave this piano to her. It resided in my grandparents’ living room, a room in the South that you only used if there was an important celebration or guests were visiting. Other than those two options, sitting on the furniture or walking on the rugs was forbidden.

By the time I had come along, tuning the piano was a fruitless task as the age of the instrument would not allow for the proper tension on the strings. I remember visiting once and my grandfather saying, “We just had the piano tuned for you. The tuner said we should look at getting another one, and that it would be useless to keep tuning it or doing any other maintenance without spending a lot of money.” I think, as normal for my grandfather, that advice went in one ear and out the other when it came to his grandchildren and this piano. It wasn’t just another piano. It was a Cable Piano Company piano that had belonged to one of his aunts, and music was an important connector.



Going back to the earliest years of Center Hill Baptist Church in Hamilton, Mississippi, my grandfather’s family was always a presence, with his mother being one of the pianists for the church. Music, and especially hymns, were highly important, and being able to hear your youngest grandchild open a hymnal and just play the melody of a hymn you grew up singing must have brought him much happiness.



For many of us, singing, or even hearing, our favorite hymn wells up memories of our loved ones and life past. I believe it must have been the same for my grandparents. A few years have passed since their death, and I couldn’t even begin to tell you their favorite hymns, even if I knew them in the first place. Although I will never forget sitting at the humongous upright piano picking my way through “Nearer My God to Thee” or whatever I was attempting.

Continued on next page

“Hymns and Hymnody: Reflections on Why We Sing” continued...

Music (and hymns) connect us to the good and bad in life, and there are countless stories of the hymn writers composing the texts or tunes in strife, as well as joy. One of the most famous stories is that of “Amazing Grace” being penned by a former slave trader, although it was not written during a literal storm at sea. It was written many years later. Fanny J. Crosby, blind from almost birth, was an American Gospel hymn author writing in excess of 2,000 hymns, many of which are still sung today (“Blessed Assurance,” “Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior,” “Jesus is Tenderly Calling,” and “To God Be the Glory,” just to name a few).

Next time you enter a church, look for a hymnal. It can tell you a lot about our individual walks with Christ. As Martin Luther once wrote: “Next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise. The gift of language combined with the gift of song was given to man that he should proclaim the Word of God through music.”



Grace Presbyterian News!



Our GPC Kids are growing not only in size but in numbers too! They once again made it their mission to collect as much Peanut Butter and Jelly for JIF Drive this past June. Last year in 2025, GPC collected **140 lbs of Peanut Butter** and **34 lbs of Jelly**. We made a goal in 2026 to collect more than that and boy did our congregation deliver! **The 2026 JIF Peanut Butter and Jelly collected 160 lbs of Peanut Butter and 30 lbs of Jelly!**

WT Chesnut is enjoying GPC's new tradition of our Grace Kids helping him load every single pound of the PB&J into his truck and delivering it to The Bread of the Mighty Food Bank in Gainesville, FL. He hopes we continue this tradition for many years to come! Well done Kids!

Teaching our kids the importance of serving their community and they couldn't have had a better time! **Don't forget JIF: Jesus is Friendly!!**

Session Meeting Highlights

June/July 2026

Finance/Stewardship

The girls in the Girl Scout troop that used our facility for many years graduated from high school in 2025. Since they have moved on, they had to distribute their funds. They chose to donate \$5,000 to Grace's General Fund

Christian Ed

The rehabilitation of the nursery room, now the Sunday school room, has been completed. A round table is being ordered.

Next Meeting: TBD

Nominating

Elder nomination will commence soon. Meeting TDA

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE & MISSION

St. Francis House—committee will discuss alternatives since the closing of the shelter, however, the Arbor House is still providing housing to low income women and children

Family Promise—slow progress on the new Family Promise Shelter . There is a Luncheon planned for August.

Rural Women's Health Project, - continuing to collect baby and non perishable food items in Narthex. Asst. Director, Adriana Menendez, spoke to the congregation on 7/19/26 to provide more information on the project.

Heifer— Most recent donation of \$500 was matched 10X in a recent giving promotion so GPC was able to donate a \$5,000 value.

Directory Update— 2 families have been added to the GPC directory.

Grace Giving Mission: The congregation collected 160 lbs of Peanut Butter and 30 lbs of Jelly. July collection was personal hygiene items, paper goods, & socks. August's collection is Cereal & Crackers.

\$1.00 Fund will go to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

Church picnic is scheduled for 9/26/26 and to be held at Camp Montgomery in the Emerald Pavillion.

Next meeting: August 4th at 11am in Office Conference Room.

ADMINISTRATION & PERSONEL

Job description for the nursery worker has been updated; Pastor Larry will be posting to spread the word.

Job description for custodial duties have also been updated. Jay Collins will gather quotes from current custodian, Coverall (Renaito, and A Step Above so the church's custodial needs are met.

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Michael Lim has been terminated as Choral Scholar as of 7/26/26.

Flowers and Chocolates were handed out by Grace's kids to women and men on Mother and Father's Day.

Piano was tuned and then moved for easier access during the worship hour.

Session Meeting Highlights

June/July

WORSHIP & MUSIC continued

The Choir chair rail was removed and the carpeting in the chancel area needs to be repaired.

Music Director, John-Peter S Ford is considering a Hymn singing event.

The AGO recital has been rescheduled for Fall 2026.

Sunday School children will be acolytes when available. Planning to adjust height of candle to make lighting easier for the kids.

Music Director, John-Peter S. Ford has prepared an advertisement for the open choral scholar position to be posted on various sites.

Next meeting: Sunday, August 16th after the worship hour

PROPERTY & OPERATIONS

Rocks were added to the pathways in the Courtyard Garden. More will need to be placed.

Air conditioning unit in the Choir Robe Room (side room off of choir room) was replaced

All other air conditioners were serviced by Jared Davis.

Replaced 12x12 filters (Customer Provided) in art studios on east side of courtyard.

Kick-plates and sweeps were added to six doors on the Fellowship Hall to prevent further degradation.

Bill Preston completed the church nursery/Sunday school room project. This included prep, painting of the walls, and installation of a LVP floor. (with help from Keith Harris, Luciano Family, & Bill Hemphill)

Artist' Studio Tour was success with almost 200 guests visiting the studios and sanctuary. John-Peter S. Ford opened the sanctuary for visitors and entertained with music while answer questions about the architecture of the sanctuary with help of a handout made about the history of GPC's sanctuary's architecture.

After discussion, a motion to inform Gia Gelpi of La Selva Studios to vacate Studio D classroom space was carried. Gia Gelpi was informed on May 24th to vacate Studio classroom by October 1st, 2026.

Jared Davis completed his quarterly cleaning of the fellowship hall and classroom roofs.

Next Session Meeting will be Sunday, August 23rd after the Worship Service.



Financial Update

For it is in Giving That We Receive

Ways to Support Grace Presbyterian Church:

1. Mail a check to the church office.
2. Use your bank's online bill pay system.
3. Use the electronic funds transfer from your savings or checking account.
4. Use a debit/credit card at the link on our website under the giving tab (there is also an image that you can click).

AUGUST 2026

Grace Presbyterian Church
3146 NW 13th Street
Gainesville, FL 32609

Phone: 352-376-5654
Email: office@gpconline.org

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.GPCONLINE.ORG

The finance committee would like to keep the congregation informed about our General Fund income and expenses and our pass through donations. If you have any questions, contact Lois Butler at 352-262-5893 or treasurer@gpconline.org.

	May	June	Through 6/30/26
Income	\$8,932.60	\$9,086.42	\$72,025.14
Expenses	\$6,291.39	\$19,424.73	\$73,904.43
Pass Through Donations			
Hearts and Hands Offering	\$ 54.00	\$ 4.27	\$ 124.83

Liturgy Passages for August 2026

Sunday, August 2 (Proper 13)

Semicontinuous

Genesis 32:22–31

Psalm 17:1–7, 15

Romans 9:1–5

Matthew 14:13–21

Complementary

Isaiah 55:1–5

Psalm 145:8–9, 14–21

Romans 9:1–5

Matthew 14:13–21

Sunday, August 9 (Proper 14)

Semicontinuous

Genesis 37:1–4, 12–28

Psalm 105:1–6, 16–22, 45b

Romans 10:5–15

Matthew 14:22–33

Complementary

1 Kings 19:9–18

Psalm 85:8–13

Romans 10:5–15

Matthew 14:22–33

Sunday, August 16 (Proper 15)

Semicontinuous

Genesis 45:1–15

Psalm 133

Romans 11:1–2a, 29–32

Matthew 15:[10–20] 21–28

Complementary

Isaiah 56:1, 6–8

Psalm 67

Romans 11:1–2a, 29–32

Matthew 15:[10–20] 21–28

Sunday, August 23 (Proper 16)

Semicontinuous

Exodus 1:8–2:10

Psalm 124

Romans 12:1–8

Matthew 16:13–20

Complementary

Isaiah 51:1–6

Psalm 138

Romans 12:1–8

Matthew 16:13–20

Sunday, August 30 (Proper 17)

Semicontinuous

Exodus 3:1–15

Psalm 105:1–6, 23–26, 45b

Romans 12:9–21

Matthew 16:21–28

Complementary

Jeremiah 15:15–21

Psalm 26:1–8

Romans 12:9–21

Matthew 16:21–28



Liturgy Passages for September 2026

Sunday, September 6 (Proper 18)

Semicontinuous

Exodus 12:1–14

Psalm 149

Romans 13:8–14

Matthew 18:15–20

Complementary

Ezekiel 33:7–11

Psalm 119:33–40

Romans 13:8–14

Matthew 18:15–20

Sunday, September 13 (Proper 19)

Semicontinuous

Exodus 14:19–31

Psalm 114 or Exodus 15:1b–11, 20–21

Romans 14:1–12

Matthew 18:21–35

Complementary

Genesis 50:15–21

Psalm 103:[1–7] 8–13

Romans 14:1–12

Matthew 18:21–35

Sunday, September 20 (Proper 20)

Semicontinuous

Exodus 16:2–15

Psalm 105:1–6, 37–45

Philippians 1:21–30

Matthew 20:1–16

Complementary

Jonah 3:10–4:11

Psalm 145:1–8

Philippians 1:21–30

Matthew 20:1–16

Sunday, September 27 (Proper 21)

Semicontinuous

Exodus 17:1–7

Psalm 78:1–4, 12–16

Philippians 2:1–13

Matthew 21:23–32

Complementary

Ezekiel 18:1–4, 25–32

Psalm 25:1–9

Philippians 2:1–13

Matthew 21:23–32



Prayer Requests

Please join us in lifting up prayers for those who have immediate concerns:

Jackie Ford, John-Peter Ford's dad
Family of Laura Raizada in her recent passing
TJ, John-Peter Ford's neighbor
Jimmy Belli, Patsy Belli's brother
Billie Jean Jones
Family and Friends Revenna Mason in her recent passing
Pauline Kirk
Family of Vernon Mize in his recent passing
Holly Durst, Lois Buttler's sister
Karen Upton, Larry Green's mother
Faye Tripp's daughter, Holly

Also pray for those with longer term needs:

Leroy Kooiker, Hannah Luciano's grandpa
Kimberly Cundiff
April Riley
Mary Williamson
Patsy Bellis
Amanda Totillo
Annette McGee
Kathy Franks
Charlie Evens
Donna Fidler
Lonnie Stevens;
Donna Fidler
Janine Groner
Billie Jean Jones
Our Military
First responders

The safety & protection of those living in areas affected by war, may they be shielded from harm & violence; for the world leaders; and those dealing with natural disasters. In addition, pray for those in our church family and our church.

If there are other people or concerns that you would like to add or delete from this list,



August & September BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Birthdays:

8/5—Kathy Franks

8/21—Jayla Williams

9/1—Don Woodward

9/4—WT (Bill) Chesnut

9/8—Anette McGee

9/14—John-Peter S. Ford

9/16—Axel Williamson

9/20—Doug Hackett

9/24—Jack Luciano

9/28—Franklin Morgan

Anniversaries:

8/6— Ann & Bill Preston

8/26—Kathy & Bob Franks



★ Please email Hannah (kooiha01@gmail.com) if your special day is not listed or incorrect.

Upcoming Events

September 26th—Grace Presbyterian End of Summer Picnic:

End of summer church potluck picnic is being planned for Saturday, September 26th, at Camp Montgomery. We have invited Westminster PC to join us. If you have never been to Camp Montgomery, you won't want to miss this! We'll be in the Emerald Pavilion where there is a covered patio and kitchen for our use. We will also be right next to the swimming area. A lifeguard will be on duty so bring your bathing suits! More details will be in the bulletin announcements as the date approaches.

\$1 FUND OFFERING

Our \$1 Fund Offering for the month of **July-September** will go to **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance**.

GRACE - GIVING AND SHARING MISSION

Grace - Giving and Sharing Mission is a food and household item collection benefiting the **Bread of the Mighty Food Bank**. For the month of **Augst** we will be collecting Ce-
real and Crackers



ELDERS ON

Elders on Call
for August are:

Karen Russ – 352-262-5419

Jay Collins – 352-870-2843

Two elders volunteer to be on call to help church members and friends who may need assistance when the church office is closed.

Our Daily Bread booklets for August are available in the narthex. If you would like one mailed, please contact Hannah at 701-955-4497.



Bible & Brew

Bible and Brew is taking a breather for Summer.

Keep you eyes open for our next Bible and Brew Date this coming Fall!



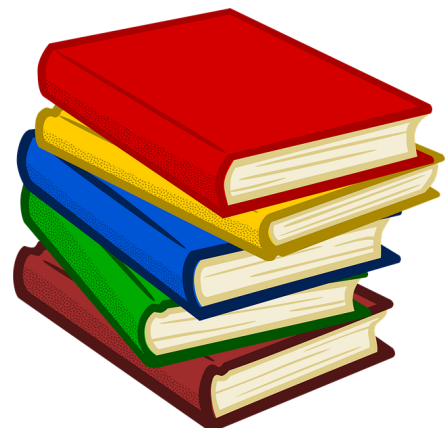
Men's Noon Lunch & Fellowship



The men of the church are invited to meet each Wednesday from 12:00 noon to 1:00 pm in the library for fellowship. Please bring your own brown bag lunch, beverages will be provided.

Circle News

The Anna Circle will
Resume soon!



August 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Communion Sunday 11:00 Worship 7:00ESWT(AA)	3 4:00 pm- Square Dancing Group	4 11:00 AM Con- gregational Life & Mission Commit- tee 7:00 pm- Barbergators	5 12:00 pm- Men's Lunch 5-6:30 pm- OE Anonymous 7:00 pm- ESWT (AA)	6 Girl Scouts 6:30pm- Gainesville Harmony Show Cho- rus	7	8
9 11:00- Worship 7:00- ESWT(AA)	10 4:00 pm- Square Dancing Group	11 7:00 pm- Barbergators	12 12:00 pm- Men's Lunch 5-6:30 pm- OE Anonymous 7:00 pm- ESWT (AA)	13 Girl Scouts 6:30pm- Gainesville Harmony Show Cho- rus	14	15
16 11:00 Worship Worship Committee 7:00ESWT(AA)	17 4:00 pm- Square Dancing Group	18 7:00 pm- Barbergators	19 12:00 pm- Men's Lunch 5-6:30 pm- OE Anonymous 7:00 pm- ESWT (AA)	20 Girl Scouts 6:30pm- Gainesville Harmony Show Cho- rus	21	22 Girl Scouts First Aid Training in Fellowship Hall 8am-3pm
23 9:45-Choir 11:00 Worship Session Meeting 7:00pm- ESWT(AA)	24 4:00 pm- Square Dancing Group	25 7:00 pm- Barbergators	26 12:00 pm- Men's Lunch 5-6:30 pm- OE Anonymous 7:00 pm- ESWT (AA)	27 Girl Scouts 6:30pm- Gainesville Harmony Show Cho- rus	28	29 Flouthern Food Truck at GPC front lawn Times will TBD

September 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
8/30 9:45-Choir 11:00 Worship 7:00-ESWT(AA)	8/31 4:00 pm-Square Dancing Group	1 11:00 AM Congregational Life & Mission Committee 7:00 pm-Barbergators	2 12:00 pm– Men’s Lunch 5-6:30 pm– OE Anonymous 7:00 pm– ESWT (AA)	3 Girl Scouts 6:30pm– Gainesville Harmony Show Chorus	4	5
6 Communion Sunday 9:45-Choir 11:00 Worship 7:00-	7 4:00 pm-Square Dancing Group	8 7:00 pm– Barbergators	9 12:00 pm– Men’s Lunch 5-6:30 pm– OE Anonymous	10 Girl Scouts 6:30pm– Gainesville Harmony Show	11	12
13 9:45-Choir 11:00 Worship 7:00-ESWT(AA)	14 4:00 pm-Square Dancing Group	15 7:00 pm– Barbergators	16 12:00 pm– Men’s Lunch 5-6:30 pm– OE Anonymous	17 Girl Scouts 6:30pm– Gainesville Harmony Show Chorus	18	19
20 9:45-Choir 11:00 Worship Worship Committee 7:00-ESWT(AA)	21 4:00 pm-Square Dancing Group	22 7:00 pm– Barbergators	23 12:00 pm– Men’s Lunch 5-6:30 pm– OE Anonymous 7:00 pm– ESWT (AA)	24 Girl Scouts 6:30pm– Gainesville Harmony Show	25	26 Church Picnic at Camp Montgomery time TBD
27 9:45-Choir 11:00 Worship Session Meeting	28 4:00 pm-Square Dancing Group	29 7:00 pm– Barbergators	30			