

February 2026

Christian Hymns and Hymnody: The Psalms

By John-Peter Ford

As I reflect on the past few years at Grace Presbyterian, many changes have occurred. One of those is the restarting of the Chancel Choir, and the joy which they bring to the services they sing at. Over the next few months, I will be authoring a series of articles for Grace Notes on Christian hymns and hymnody to introduce us to how music, and specifically singing, has been used throughout the history of the church.

Music in the Christian church is as old as Christianity itself. The Bible provides multiple examples of singing the praises to and for God and offers examples of songs of praise. Hymns are evident in the New Testament through passages such as Revelation 5:9-10 and Revelation 15:3-4, and in passages where New Testament authors quote poetic material of the Old Testament, such as Mary's Magnificat, Zechariah's Benedictus, Simeon's Nunc Dimittis, and the Psalms.

Psalms most likely found their way into this early Christian worship through the first Jewish converts to Christianity. While there is no description of first-century description of Psalmic activity in the Temple, there is ample discussion in the Old Testament regarding the usage of musical events in Solomon's First Temple.

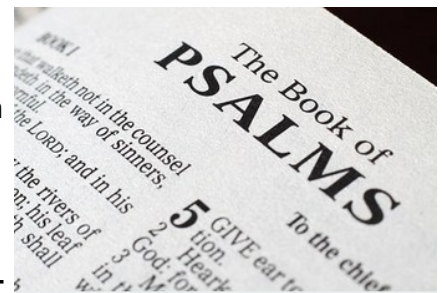
While some scholars assert there is no known musical connection between Solomon's First Temple and the Temple in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus, 130 years after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 AD, Rabbi Judah ha-Nasi compiled the Mishnah, the first major collection of the Jewish oral tradition, and included descriptions of how the Psalms were used within the Second Temple. Certain Psalms were recited on particular days at the hours of prayer/ sacrifice. Frequent Temple goers would have been acquainted with the widely used Psalms. (Day 1: Ps 24; Day 2: Ps 28; Day 3: Ps 82; Day 4: Ps 94; Day 5: Ps 81; Day 6: PS 93; Day 7 (Sabbath): Ps 92)

Psalms are an integral part of the modern church, as they were of the early church. The early church from AD 30 (Pentecost) to AD 476 (fall of Rome) was shaped in an improvisatory manner. Jesus' followers preached his resurrection first at Pentecost (fifty days after Passover) when the Holy Spirit fell on them (Acts 2). The New Testament writers quote the Psalms sixty-nine times, more than any other ancient source! (Peter's sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2: 25–35), quoted Ps 16:8–11 and 110:1.)



Psalms shaped the understanding of early Christians and their worship, and even shape our worship today. "The Psalms comprised the very DNA of the early church, dramatically celebrating both the Who of God (his nature) and the What (his actions)." Psalms provide an impact on theology, and Paul assumed that song should be a normal part of Christian worship, as well as James' admonition to express joy through song. The Psalms incited the development of the Monastic Offices, which would lead to the Roman Mass. Take a glance through our hymnal. How many of the hymns are based on Psalms? Every time we sing one of these, we are following in the steps of the early Christians in proclaiming the Word of God through song.

Lamport, Mark A., Benjamin K. Forrest, and Vernon M. Whaley. *Hymns and Hymnody: Historical and Theological Introductions*, Volume 1, 2, 3. Oregon: Cascade Books, 2019.



Session Meeting Highlights

January 2026

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE

Financial update on page 3.

Christian Ed

Grace Presbyterian Kids have been enjoying Sunday School and have reported looking forward to it every week!

Nominating

Elder nomination will commence soon. Meeting TDA

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE & MISSION

St. Francis House—prepared and delivered Friday, January 16th

Family Promise—11 gift cards were collected for Christmas. Annual Bed Race is planned for March 21, 2026

Rural Women's Health Project, - GPC donated \$500.00 from the Nunn Mission Fund. Kathy Colverson reported how thankful they were to have received the donation.

Epiphany Meal and service was held Jan. 6th joined by 6 Westminster members.

Planning to clean out and organize the Sunday School Room on Sunday, February 8th.

Next meeting: February 3rd at 11am in Office Conference Room.

ADMINISTRATION & PERSONEL

Still hoping to hire a new nursery worker.

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 18, 2026. Westminster Presbyterian church will join GPC in the Sanctuary for a 7 pm service.

Committee met and voted to add Gloria Patria to the worship service beginning 1/25/26 and continuing until Lent begins, then resuming on Easter Sunday.

Next meeting: February, Sunday 2/15/26

PROPERTY & OPERATIONS

Jared fixed a leak in the plumbing behind the wall in Classroom D, Gia Gelpi's studio, replaced the drywall and replaced the child-sized toilet with a normal-sized toilet.

Jared cleaned off the roofs.

Money was donated for painting and installing new carpet in the nursery.

Some of the toys and furniture from the nursery was hauled to the dump.

Next Session Meeting: Sunday, February 22, 2026 following Worship in the Church Office's Conference Room.

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).

FEBRUARY 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.

	December	Year to Date
Income	\$ 12,592.50	\$ 99,599.81
Expenses	\$ 8,684.60	\$ 122,647.03
Pass Through Donations		
Hearts and Hands Offering	\$ 3.25	\$253.62
Joy Gift	\$120.00	\$143.54

Liturgy Passages for February 2026

Sunday, February 1st

Micah 6: 1-8
 Psalm 15
 1 Corinthians 1: 18-31
 Matthew 5: 1-12

Sunday, February 8

Isaiah 58: 1-9a [9b-12]
 Psalm 112: 1-9 [10]
 1 Corinthians 2: 1-12 [13-16]
 Matthew 5: 13-20

Sunday February 15

Transfiguration of the Lord
Exodus 24: 12-18
Psalm 2 or Psalm 99
2 Peter 1: 16-21
Matthew 17: 1-9

February 18

Ash Wednesday

Joel 2: 1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:
1-12

Psalm 51: 1-17

2 Corinthians 5: 20b- 6:10

Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21

Sunday, February 22

Fist Sunda of Lent

Genesis 2: 15-17; 3: 1-7
 Psalm 32
 Romans 5: 12-19
 Matthew 4: 1-11



February BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Anniversaries

2/14—Mary and WT Chesnut



Birthdays:

2/1—Josh Osteen
2/4—Pauline Kirk
2/15—Barbara Nunnery
2/22—Katie Bush
2/25 Larry Green

Please email Hannah (kooiha01@gmail.com) if your

Prayer Requests

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

Karen Russ and her family on the passing of her son, Kirk
John-Peter Ford's family and friends effected by the winter storm in Mississippi
Kimberly Cundiff
Holly Durst, Lois Buttler's sister
Jerry Butler's Family
Our new friend Whitney with terrible back pain.
Karen Upton, Larry Green's mother
Hannah Luciano's Family on the passing of her brother, Timothy.
Faye Tripp's daughter, Holly

Also pray for those with longer term needs:

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, please contact Lois Butler by phone at 352-262-5893 or by email at rickloang@yahoo.com or Hannah Luciano by email at kooiha01@gmail.com



The Worship Committee reminds church members and friends that the 2025 Flower Calendar is posted in the narthex. Fresh floral arrangements are \$35 and you may place your name on any selected date of your choosing. Please note that roses added to your arrangement are in addition to the \$35.00 and are \$5.00 each.



YIPPEE!

JOIN IN THE FUN
AND HELP YOUR
LOCAL COMMUNITY!



 FamilyPromise
of Gainesville

BEDRACE

2026

SATURDAY,
MARCH 21ST
10AM

UNITED TRINITY
METHODIST CHURCH
4000 NW 53RD AVENUE
GAINESVILLE, FL 32653

Mid-Week Bible Study



On the **1st and 3rd Thursday on 2/5 and 2/19 from 6pm - 7:30pm.** We will meet via zoom. If you're interested in joining us, you will need the link. For security reasons we won't publish the link, so please contact Larry at (larry@gainesvillecounselingcenter.com) and he will send you the link. Mark off **March 5th** and **March 19th**. If you can't join, we will record the study so you can view it later.

Bible & Brew

Join Larry for Bible & Brew the **2nd & 4th Thursday (2/12 & 2/26) in from 7-8:30 pm** at the **University Club** (18 E. University Ave.). All are welcome to join us in an open conversation and relaxed environment. Topics will be decided closer to the date. Please contact Larry if you have any questions. Mark off **March 12th** and **March 26th** for next month's B&B.



\$1 FUND OFFERING

Our \$1 Fund Offering for the month of **January-March** will go to **Family Promise**.

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 **February** we will be collecting Soup (dried or canned)



ELDERS ON

Elders on Call
for February are:

Debbie Harris— 352-213-5645

Karen Russ— 352-262-5419

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 February are available in the narthex. If you would like one mailed, please contact Hannah at 701-955-4497.



Men's Noon Lunch & Fellowship

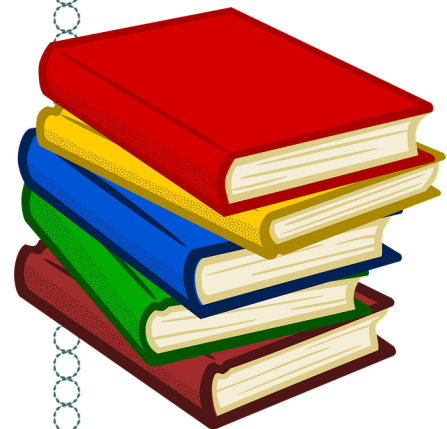


The men of the church are invited to meet each Wednesday from 12:00 noon to 1:00 pm in the library for fellowship. Please bring your own brown bag lunch, beverages will be provided.

Circle News

The Anna Circle will meet February 3rd and March 10th in the Library at Noon.

This session will be Parables by John Mac-Arther. Chapter 6 will be this month's discussion.



FEBRUARY 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:45-Choir 11:00- Worship— Communion Sunday 7:00-ESWT(AA)	2 4:00 pm-Square Dancing Group	3 11:00 AM Congrega- tional Life & Mission Committee 12:00 pm— Anna Circle 7:00 pm— Barbergators	4 12:00 pm— Men's Lunch 5-6:30 pm— OE Anonymous 7:00 pm— ESWT (AA)	5 6:00 pm—Mid-Week Bible Study via Zoom Girl Scouts 6:30pm— Gainesville Harmony Show Chorus	6	7
8 9:45-Choir 11:00 Worship Christian Ed Committee after worship 2 pm-Girl Scouts	9 4:00 pm-Square Dancing Group	10 7:00 pm— Barbergators	11 12:00 pm— Men's Lunch 5-6:30 pm— OE Anonymous	12 7:00 pm—Bible & Brew at "University Club" Girl Scouts 6:30pm— Gainesville Har- mony Show Chorus	13	14
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22 9:45-Choir 11:00- Worship Session Meeting 7:00-ESWT(AA)	23 4:00 pm-Square Dancing Group	24 7:00 pm— Barbergators	25 12:00 pm— Men's Lunch	26 7:00 pm—Bible & Brew at "University Club" Girl Scouts 6:30pm— Gainesville Har- mony Show Chorus	27	28

MARCH 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:45-Choir 11:00- Worship— Communion Sun- day 7:00-ESWT(AA)	2 4:00 pm-Square Dancing Group	3 7:00 pm— Barbergators	4 12:00 pm— Men's Lunch 5-6:30 pm— OE Anonymous 7:00 pm— ESWT (AA)	5 6:00 pm—Mid-Week Bible Study via Zoom Girl Scouts 6:30pm— Gainesville Harmony Show Chorus	6	7
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