

GRACE NOTES

October 2025

World Communion Sunday is about more than Christian Unity

Article by Rev. Jennifer Butler on <https://pres-outlook.org/2023/10/world-communion-sunday-is-about-more-than-christian-unity/>
published October 3, 2023

(RNS) - This week Christians celebrate World Communion Sunday, which reminds Christians of what they hold in common instead of what divides them.

As Christian nationalism and other religious nationalisms rise globally, threatening democracy and the planet, this celebration can become something more — not just a unifying ritual for our religious tribe but also a ritual that moves us beyond the tribal to the universal.

World Communion was envisioned by Dr. Hugh Thompson Kerr, pastor of Shadyside Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, in 1933. But it was not until after the genocidal horrors and mass death of the Second World War that it caught hold.

“World Wide Communion symbolized the effort to hold things together in a spiritual sense. It emphasized that we are one in the Spirit and the Gospel of Jesus Christ,” his son Donald told the Presbyterian Outlook years later.

Yes, it is important to get our Christian house in order as part of our effort to bring unity and peace to the world. Yet, all too often, the focus on Christian unity turns to doctrine and institutional unity, distracting us from the more significant implications of Communion.

Jesus offered the table as a vision for all humanity, a shared meal in the shadow of empire, an embrace of the sacrifice of the individual for the sake of all.

Biblical scholar Ched Myers writes that the “Eucharist gathered Christians around the life of a Jewish prophet (Jesus) who Caesar’s imperial execution stake could not vanquish.”

Likewise, the Jewish Passover, which Jesus celebrated in Mark 14, “signaled the liberation of Hebrews from the imperial straightjacket of Pharaoh’s Egypt,” wrote Myers.

These two meals gave birth to a people whose “actions of disarmed resistance to empire eventually became historical watersheds, animating countless future slave revolts and inspiring many subsequent believers, famous and forgotten, to embrace the via crucis.”

World Communion Sunday can help us see beyond our own religious, racial, gender or national tribe and help us embrace a vision of human and planetary flourishing — a realization that all are one.



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What happens to one — human or nonhuman — happens to all. One is not free until all are free.

Myers, in writing about both Communion and the Jewish Passover, reminds us that these sacred meals do not exist for our own benefit. Instead, they are an invitation “to turn the world right side up.”

“Let us not imagine that these sacred meals are some sort of religious entitlement, or empty ritual, or venue for strictly private spirituality,” he writes. “Rather, when we Jews and Christians come to our respective table of Memory, we are part of a legacy that invites our embrace, an ongoing struggle to take back the Freedom story from empire-builders and profiteers and to restore it among Kingdom-seekers and prophets.”

Taking the Freedom story back means to see ourselves as world citizens, unified with those of all faiths and ethical persuasions who embrace dignity, respect and well-being for all and to reclaim faith for justice at a moment in history when powerful religious movements are making common cause with authoritarian leaders.

Religion is being used to fan hatred and divide communities — with the goals of autocratic power-building and greed.

From the United States and Brazil to Uganda and Russia, Christian nationalists are using issues of sexuality and race to divide and conquer, distracting from real issues like the environment, inequality and corruption.



This kind of misuse of religion is not limited to Christianity. Hindu Nationalism in India is sparking violence against religious (Muslim and Christian) and social minorities and even impacting U.S. politics. Buddhist nationalism is oppressing Muslim minority groups in Myanmar. Millions of Israelis recently turned out in the streets to resist Jewish nationalism in the current ruling coalition.

Transformative nonviolent movements have galvanized millions in the last century and a half to bring about an end to apartheid, segregation, colonial rule and repressive regimes around the world and to create the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Religious beliefs that are rooted in the concept of universal human dignity and freedom were inspirational in these movements. It will require a transnational movement of this magnitude to counter what is transpiring today.

May our celebrations of World Communion move us to action that fulfills our vision of a world free from oppression and exploitation.

Session Meeting Highlights September

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE

	May	June	July	August	Through 8/31
Income	\$4,246.48	\$ 5,193.92	\$5,892.01	\$4,495.48	\$72,390.55
Expenses	\$5,196.49	\$15,657.32	\$9,444.06	\$8,612.62	\$82,678.04
Pass Through Donations					
Hearts and Hands Offering	\$72.92	\$9.60	\$9.29	\$11.20	\$210.58

Christian Education

Next Meeting to be held Sunday, October 5th, after worship in the Library.

Zoom Bible Study & Bible & Brew began in September and was very successful.

Lesson plan for kids is done through the end of 2025.

Nominating

Elder nomination will commence soon. Meeting TDA

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE & MISSION

St. Francis House—Next meal will be 10/17/25

Family Promise-GPC will sponsor decorating & equipping one bathroom in new FP House.

\$1.00 Fund October-December will be donated to Heifer International.

Grace Giving Mission for October will be collecting Canned Vegetables.

Directory Update—newest pages have been printed and are in Narthex. Copies of Directory have been given to new members and friends.

Next meeting: 10/9/25 at 11 am in Office's Conference Room

ADMINISTRATION & PERSONEL

Admin Assistant, Hannah Luciano's hours are back to 12 hours a week.

WORSHIP & MUSIC

New worship communion procedure was updated and has passed approval.

Many thanks to Clint Collins, Pastor Larry Green, and John-Peter Ford for the vast improvement in the sound quality on newly purchased iPad for worship streaming purposes. Many positive comments have come from members and friends at home tuning in to watch Worship.

Choir resumes Sunday, October 5th at 9:45am

Holiday preparation: Sanctuary decorating on Saturday 11/29/25 at 10 AM

GPC to host Thanksgiving Dinner

Next meeting: Sunday, 10/19/25 after worship

PROPERTY & OPERATIONS

Linda Zidonik and Christine Brudige have painted their respective art studios.

Studio C added a proper utility sink and stand alone air conditioning unit at expense of Linda Zidonik with Jared Davis's assistance.

Bill Preston is working on making back door usable and Kirk Meade will be replacing the rotten railing on the ramp off back door.

Next Session Meeting: Sunday, October 26th, following Worship in the Church Office's Conference Room.

Liturgy Passages for October 2025

September-Semicontinuous

10/5/25 (Proper 22)

Lamentations 1: 1-6

Psalm 137

2 Timothy 1: 1-14

Luke 17: 5/10

10/12/25 (Proper 23)

Jeremiah 29: 1, 4-7

Psalm 66:1-12

2 Timothy 2: 8-15

Luke 17: 11-19

10/19/25 (Proper 24)

Jeremiah 31: 27-34

Psalm 119: 97-104

2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

Luke 18: 1-8

10/26/25 (Proper 25)

Joel 2: 23-32

Psalm 65

2 Timothy 4: 6-8, 16-18

Luke 18: 9-14

September-Complementary

10/5/25 (Proper 22)

Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2: 1-4

Psalm 37: 1-9

2 Timothy 1: 1-14

Luke 17: 5/10

10/12/25 (Proper 23)

2 Kings 5: 1-3, 7-15c

Psalm 111

2 Timothy 2: 8-15

Luke 17: 11-19

10/19/25 (Proper 24)

Genesis 32: 22-31

Psalm 121

2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

Luke 18: 1-8

10/26/25 (Proper 25)

Jeremiah 14: 7-10, 19-22

Psalm 84: 1-7 h

2 Timothy 4: 6-8, 16-18

Luke 18: 9-14



Announcements:

- 1) **Cleaning up and Clearing Out:** Our Fellowship Hall has a lot of treasures in its nooks and crannies that need to be claimed or donated to make room for updates to our Sunday School room and Nursery. There a lot of left over items from previous activities, so if you would like to take a look at anything, please contact Hannah Luciano (kooiha01@gmail.com or 701-955-4497).
- 2) **Grace Choir** is reconvening!!! Sunday morning rehearsals begin again on October 5th , 2025 9:45-10:30. **All are welcome** to join to make a joyful noise to the Lord!
- 3) On Saturday, January 24, 2026 will be the annual Equipped to Serve training event (formerly known as Back Together Again (Again). This will be held at Montgomery Center again this year. More information to come.



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.



Prayer Requests

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

Mary Chesnut
Phyllis Manning's family on her passing.
Jerry and Lois Butler
Family of Wayne Wagner on his passing
Jennifer Hemphill's family on the passing of her sister, Wendy Franse
Debbie Harris
April Riley
Patsy Bellis
Amanda Totillo
Annette McGee
Kathy Franks
Faye Tripp
Mary Williamson
Hannah Luciano's friend and former paster, Dr. Rev. Leanne Simmons in her fight against cancer.



Also pray for those with longer term needs:

Charlie Evens
Jerry Butler
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

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).



OCTOBER 2025

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.

October BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Anniversary:

10/8– Bob Franks

10/31 Katie Bauman & Doug Hackett

10/9– Beth Hartwell

Birthdays

10/18– Aidan Collins

10/1– Margie Baker

10/21– Mohan Raizada

10/1– Mary Ellen McAlpine

10/23– Jennifer Hemphill



Please email Hannah (kooiha01@gmail.com) if your
special day is **NOT** listed or is **NOT** correct.

A stylized illustration of an open book. The book is shown from a three-quarter perspective, with its pages fanned out. The cover is dark grey or black, featuring a prominent yellow cross in the center. The pages are a light cream color. A red bookmark or ribbon is visible at the bottom of the pages. The background is a bright yellow circle with several black, teardrop-shaped radiating lines emanating from behind the book, suggesting a glowing or significant light source.

On the 1st and 3rd Thursdays 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. So mark off October 2nd and October 16th. If you can't join, we will record the study so you can view it later.

Join Larry at Bible & Brew on October 23rd 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. We will be discussing the topic of **[TBD]** Please contact Larry if you have any questions.



Men's Noon Lunch & Fellowship



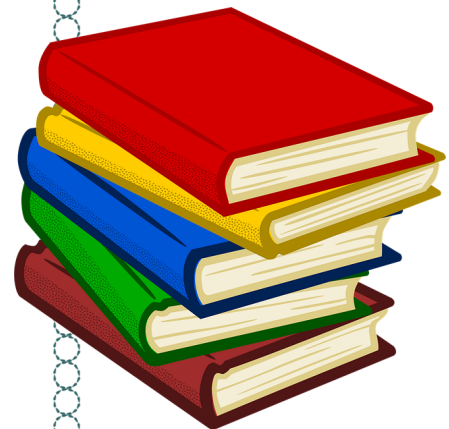
The men of the church are invited to meet each Wednesday from 12:00 noon to 1:00 pm in the library for fellowship. Please bring your own brown bag lunch, beverages will be provided.

Circle News

The Anna Circle will meet October 9th in the Library at Noon.

This session will be Parables by John Mac-Arther.

Chapter 2 will be this month's discussion.



Financial Update

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.

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Pass Through Donations					
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\$1 FUND OFFERING

Our \$1 Fund Offering for the month of **October—December** will go to **Heifer International**

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 **October** we will be collecting **Canned Vegetables**.



ELDERS ON CALL

Elders on Call
for October are:

Debbie Harris– 352-213-5645
Faye Tripp– 904-307-4082

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

Our Daily Bread booklets for October are
available in the narthex



OCTOBER 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 6:00 pm—Mid-Week Bible Study via Zoom (contact Larry for Link)	3	4
5 9:45-Choir 11:00- Worship—World Communion Sunday Christian Ed Committee after worship 7:00-ESWT(AA)	6 4:00 pm-Square Dancing Group	7 7:00 pm—Barbergators	8 12:00 pm—Men's Lunch 5-6:30 pm— OE Anonymous 7:00 pm— ESWT (AA)	9 11:00 AM Congregational Life & Mission Committee 12:00 pm— Anna Circle Girl Scouts 6:30pm— Gainesville Harmony Show Chorus	10	11
12 9:45-Choir 11:00 Worship 2 pm-Girl Scouts 7:00-ESWT(AA)	13 4:00 pm-Square Dancing Group	14 7:00 pm—Barbergators	15 12:00 pm—Men's Lunch 5-6:30 pm— OE Anonymous 7:00 pm— ESWT (AA)	16 6:00 pm—Mid-Week Bible Study via Zoom (contact Larry for Link) Girl Scouts 6:30pm— Gainesville Harmony Show Chorus	17	18
19 9:45-Choir 11:00- Worship Worship Committee 7:00-ESWT(AA)	20 4:00 pm-Square Dancing Group	21 7:00 pm—Barbergators	22 12:00 pm—Men's Lunch 5-6:30 pm— OE Anonymous 7:00 pm— ESWT (AA)	23 7:00 pm—Bible & Brew at "University Club" Girl Scouts 6:30pm— Gainesville Harmony Show Chorus	24	25
26 9:45-Choir 11:00- Worship Session Meeting 7:00-ESWT(AA)	27 4:00 pm-Square Dancing Group	28 7:00 pm—Barbergators	29	30	31 Halloween 	