

GRACE NOTES

October 2026

Grace Presbyterian Church

Where All People Are Welcome Around the Table of God.



October 2026

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Summer has officially ended, and Autumn has begun in Gainesville and at Grace Presbyterian Church. As we move into a new season, it's always nice to reflect on what's happened over the past year. In the music ministry at Grace, we bid goodbye to Michael Lim and welcomed Glenn Fischer as the Choral Scholar. Our thriving children's ministry has been fruitful, and we launched a Cherub Choir that joined last year's Lessons and Carols and this year's Palm Sunday. I am thoroughly excited for this fall choir season, and while the Chancel Choir is still small in numbers, it is mighty in singing praises to God! "It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to your name, O Most High," Psalms 92:1 (NRSVUE)

Every Sunday the choir meets, I always end our time together in prayer and specifically pray that we may see the abundance we have been given in our lives, even when we may not think there is abundance. As I look around Grace, I see gifts of abundance even when we don't think they are there. Every day we have the chance to live in that abundance and share the love of God with everyone who crosses our path.

One great hymn that celebrates the abundance in our lives is "For the Beauty of the Earth." In 1863, Folliott S. Pierpoint was wandering through the English countryside along the winding Avon River. As he looked on the peaceful beauty surrounding him, he was inspired to reflect on God's gifts to his people in creation and in the church. Above all, Pierpoint thought of the sacrifice of Christ, the greatest of sacrifices, his life in return for ours. He originally wrote the text of "For the Beauty of the Earth" as a hymn for the Lord's Supper. The original chorus read, "Christ, our God, to thee we raise this, our sacrifice of praise."

The hymn was meant not only as a song of thanksgiving but as the only thing we could give Christ in return for his mercy and love: a hymn of praise laid upon the altar as a sacrifice. Editors have since altered the refrain, making it a more generic hymn of thanksgiving, but as it stands, it takes on a deeper meaning when understood as something we not only sing but offer up to God.

"For the beauty of the earth,
for the glory of the skies,
for the love which from our birth
over and around us lies.
Christ, our Lord, to you we raise
this, our hymn of grateful praise..."

- John-Peter S. Ford

‘Jesus Loves Me, This I Know’

By McKenna Britton, Presbyterian Historical Society

'Jesus Loves Me, This I Know' | Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The first Sunday school was founded in 1780 in Manchester, England, by Robert Raikes, whose goal was to provide free instruction to poor children on Sundays. After visiting Scotland with her husband in 1801 and observing a Sunday school there, Joanna Graham Bethune tried to garner interest among clergymen in New York to start similar institutions in the city.

In 1816, with the support of her fellow women, Bethune helped found the Female Union Society for the Promotion of Sabbath Schools in New York. The purpose of this new group was “to stimulate and encourage those engaged in the education and religious instruction of the ignorant; to improve the method of instruction; to promote the opening of new schools; to unite in Christian love, persons of various denominations engaged in the same honorable employment.”

Meanwhile in 1817 in Philadelphia, Alexander Henry, a Presbyterian layman and merchant, formed a similar city-wide association called the Sunday and Adult School Union. The nondenominational organization which resulted had two main objectives: to promote the establishment of Sunday schools and to provide libraries and supplies for their use.

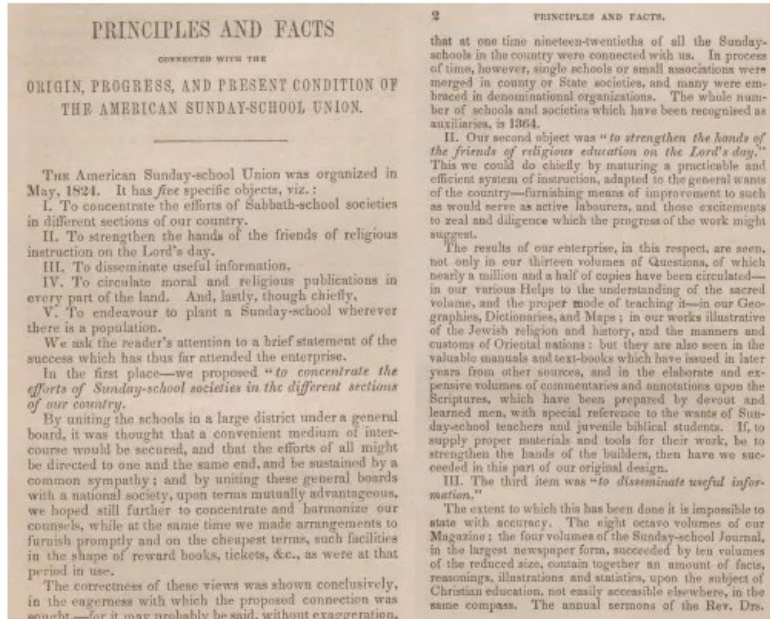


American Sunday School Union, [Pearl Digital Collections](#).

Within a year after its founding, the Union's activities and influence extended far beyond the boundaries of Philadelphia. Requests for admission to and aid from the Union came from schools and societies throughout the country. To facilitate its work, the Sunday and Adult School Union hired William Blair as a trained missionary in 1821. In his first year, Blair traveled 2,500 miles between Pennsylvania and North Carolina. He founded 61 schools, visited 35 others, revived 20, and established six tract societies and four adult schools. By 1823, more than 700 societies and individual schools were enrolled in the Union, while approximately 7,000 teachers and 50,000 students were affiliated with it.

In 1824, Henry's endeavor was renamed the American Sunday School Union, as it expanded its activities to the national level. The goals of the Union were reiterated in the constitution of the newly named society—the objects were to "concentrate the efforts of Sabbath school societies in the different sections of our country; to strengthen the hands of the friends of pious instruction on the Lord's day; to disseminate useful information, circulate moral and religious publications in every part of the land; and to endeavor to plant a Sunday school wherever there is a population."

The Presbyterian Historical Society is the home of the American Sunday School Union (ASSU) Records, a collection made up of 177 boxes of materials. Ranging from 1817 to 1933, the records primarily consist of correspondence and annual reports. In 1980, Barbara A. Sokolosky shared with PHS the administrative history of the Union that she'd compiled. It is extensive, almost 5,000 words long, and highly detailed. Readers and researchers interested in learning more about the 19th century beginnings of the American Sunday School Union, how the organization survived during the Civil War and beyond, and the publication of serial magazines like the Youth's Penny Gazette can read Sokolosky's [full history in the collection guide](#).



Principles and facts connected with the origin, progress, and present condition of the American Sunday School Union, 1840, [Pearl Digital Collections](#).

Evangelism and Sunday school enrollment steadily increased in the early 20th century. The ASSU continued to send missionaries into rural homes, with almost 200,000 families visited by 1915. At that time, the total number of schools organized since 1817 was estimated at 131,814; the total enrollment for the 100 years was nearly 700,000 teachers and over five million students.

The Sunday school has played a pivotal role in the Christian education of many generations of children and adults. Hand in hand with its development, women's role within the church has expanded. From the beginning, most Sunday school teachers were women, and their participation dramatically changed the generally accepted scope of female activities. Through their involvement, they gained opportunities not only to teach, but also to engage in social work and theological study, to establish libraries, prepare curriculum materials and to work in a national institutional network.

One of the most familiar Sunday school songs is "Jesus Loves Me." This hymn is an example of the great Presbyterian influence on the Sunday school movement, for the words are by Anna Bartlett Warner, a devout Presbyterian.



National Sunday School Association's first convention, 1946, [Pearl Digital Collections](#).

[Anna Bartlett Warner](#) was born in New York City in 1827, a decade after Henry's Sunday and Adult School Union was established downriver in Philadelphia. Anna's mother died shortly after her birth; her lawyer father lost almost everything they had in the Panic of 1837. The family left the city and moved to their former summer home near West Point.

To help with expenses, Anna and her older sister, [Susan](#), became writers. Both separately and in collaboration, they produced best-selling novels and Sunday school literature. Susan Bogert Warner is best remembered for her novel "[The Wide, Wide World](#)," the first of 30 novels she'd write. Published in 1850 under the pen name Elizabeth Wetherell, "The Wide, Wide World" was a brilliant success. Jo March reads Wetherell's novel in Louisa May Alcott's "Little Women"; Susan's best-selling novel went through 14 editions in just two years. Anna also published her works under

a pen name, Amy Lothrop. As Lothrop, Anna wrote more than a dozen books, including two collections of hymns.

In 1860, the sisters finished a thousand-page novel, "[Say and Seal](#)," to great reception. In the preface, the women introduce their work as being "of very moderate limits — considering that two women had to have their say in it. It is pleasant to wear a glove when one

shakes hands with the Public; therefore we still use our ancestors' names instead of our own — but it is fair to state, that in this case there are a pair of gloves! Which is the right glove, and which the left, the Public will never know," they jest, before sharing a glimpse into the story that follows.

"Meantime, hear this. In a shady, sunshiny town, lying within certain bounds— geographical or imaginary, — these events (really or in imagination) occurred. Precisely when, the chroniclers do not say. Scene opens with the breezes which June, and the coming of a new school teacher, naturally create. After the fashion of the place, his lodgings are arranged for him beforehand, by the School Committee. But where, or in what circumstances, the scene may close, — having told at the end of the book, we do not incline to tell at the beginning."

The sentimental plot revolves around a Sunday school teacher named John Lindon, his love for a girl named Faith, and his concern for one of his pupils, a sickly little boy. As John holds the dying boy near the end of the book, he sings these lines:

"Jesus loves me, this I know, For the Bible tells me so; Little ones to him belong, They are weak but he is strong. Jesus loves me — he who died / Heaven's gate to open wide; He will wash away my sin, Let his little child come in. Jesus loves me, loves me still, Though I'm very weak and ill; From his shining throne on high / Comes to watch me where I lie. Jesus loves me — He will stay / Close beside me all the way, Then his little child will take / Up to heaven for his dear sake."

Anna penned the above words, which, in 1861, would be set to music by hymn writer William B. Bradbury. Bradbury also added the chorus: "Yes, Jesus loves me; The Bible tells me so." The rest was history.



[Anna Bartlett Warner](#) at left; [Susan Bogert Warner](#) at right. Images courtesy of Wikipedia.

After leaving New York City, Susan started a Bible class for West Point cadets, and the sisters taught the class in their home for decades, writing all the while. Anna Warner continued to teach Sunday school for the cadets almost until her death in 1915, when she was buried in the West Point Cemetery, where she rests alongside her sister.

The ASSU exists today, as InFaith. Readers can learn more about the history of the organization at InFaith's website, where the group shares updates on its various ministries, including chaplaincy, creative arts, trauma and abuse recovery, and more. InFaith's current mission echoes that of Henry's initial hopes — to offer healing, purpose, and a sense of belonging to those in need; to change lives through the sharing of Christ's love.



Children ready to march in the 134th annual Brooklyn Sunday School Union Parade, 1963, [Pearl Digital Collections](#).



Children ready to march in the 134th annual Brooklyn Sunday School Union Parade, 1963 (Pearl Digital Collections)

<https://pcusa.org/news-storytelling/news/2026/7/23/jesus-loves-me-i-know>

GPC Annual Picnic 2026

Good Food
Always Brings
People
Together!



GPC Annual Picnic 2026

Music and Swimming, and Kayaks, Oh My!



Session Meeting Highlights

August/September 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.

Church Officer Nominating Committee

Christian Ed

The rehabilitation of the nursery room, now the Sunday school room, has been completed. A round table, cork board, and white board are being ordered.

Next Meeting: 10/18/26

Nominating

Elder nomination will commence soon. Meeting TDA

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE & MISSION

An email was sent to members and friends letting them know that Arbor House/St Francis House are no longer in existence. We currently have \$753.05 in the fund that was used to provide meals to St Francis House residents. The committee would like to donate \$250.00 of that fund to the Rural Women's Health/Good Neighbor Project and move the balance to the Family Promise Fund which is used to provide meals for those being assisted by Family Promise.

Family Promise— A well-attended fundraising luncheon was held at the Gainesville Women's Club September 24 th . Grace sponsored a table and Jennifer Hemphill, Lois Butler, Lois's mother, Nancy, Karen Russ, Debbie Harris and Bill Hawkins enjoyed an inspiring program and delicious meal. Baby Items for Family Promise in grey bins.

Grace Giving Mission for September was cake/brownie mixes & frostings. We will be collecting canned vegetables in October.

Rural Women's Health/Good Neighbor project – ongoing collection of baby items and nonperishables in gray bin in narthex.

\$1.00 Fund will go to Heifer International October—December.

Visitor Bags – we put together 6 more visitor bags. Need to order more Grace keychains. Put in credenza in narthex. Be sure to update copy of Grace Notes.

Church potluck picnic –Was held Saturday, September 26. Westminster PC and Dr. David Rollins, Lead Presbyter, joined us. Purchased hot dogs and hamburgers with committee funds. Bill Chesnut manned the grill and Larry brought delicious brisket and pulled pork that he grilled at home. We had a great turn-out and the children had tons of fun swimming and kayaking in Emerald Lake. Glenn Fischer entertained us at the gazebo with his beautiful music, singing hymns, old and new. We couldn't have asked for better weather.

Next meeting: Tuesday, October 13th 11am in Office Conference Room.

ADMINISTRATION & PERSONEL

Glenn Fischer has been hired as choral scholar.

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

Session Meeting Highlights August/September

WORSHIP & MUSIC

- Glenn Fischer has been chosen as new Coral Scholar effective 9/27/26
- A Communion preparation instructions has been placed on the counter in the Weaver room.
- John-Peter Ford replaced the door knob in the hallway where paraments are stored.
- Sunday School children will be acolytes when available. Planning to adjust height of candle to make lighting easier for the kids.
- Advent beings 11/29/26. Decorating the Sanctuary for the season will be on 11/28/26 at 10am.
- Lessons & Carols will be on 12/6 with Communion.
- Christmas Eve service will be held at Grace Presbyterian this year and inviting Westminster to join us.
- Epiphany is 1/6/27, final plan will be determined.
- Next meeting: Sunday, October 18th after the worship hour

PROPERTY & OPERATIONS

Gia has partially moved out of Studio D. The expectation is that she will be out by Thursday, October 1st.

Bill Preston fixed the light in front of the church office.

Next Session Meeting will be Sunday, October 25th 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).



OCTOBER 2026

Grace Presbyterian Church
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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.

	August	Through 8/31/26
Income	\$5,676.88	\$96,292.15
Expenses	\$7,083.18	\$89,217.34
Pass Through Donations		
Hearts and Hands Offering	\$4.00	\$135.81

Liturgy Passages for October 2026

October

Sunday, October 4 (Proper 22)

Semicontinuous

Exodus 20:1–4, 7–9, 12–20

Psalm 19

Philippians 3:4b–14

Matthew 21:33–46

Complementary

Isaiah 5:1–7

Psalm 80:7–15

Philippians 3:4b–14

Matthew 21:33–46

Sunday, October 11 (Proper 23)

Semicontinuous

Exodus 32:1–14

Psalm 106:1–6, 19–23

Philippians 4:1–9

Matthew 22:1–14

Complementary

Isaiah 25:1–9

Psalm 23

Philippians 4:1–9

Matthew 22:1–14

Sunday, October 18 (Proper 24)

Semicontinuous

Exodus 33:12–23

Psalm 99

1 Thessalonians 1:1–10

Matthew 22:15–22

Complementary

Isaiah 45:1–7

Psalm 96:1–9 [10–13]

1 Thessalonians 1:1–10

Matthew 22:15–22

Sunday, October 25 (Proper 25)

Semicontinuous

Deuteronomy 34:1–12

Psalm 90:1–6, 13–17

1 Thessalonians 2:1–8

Matthew 22:34–46

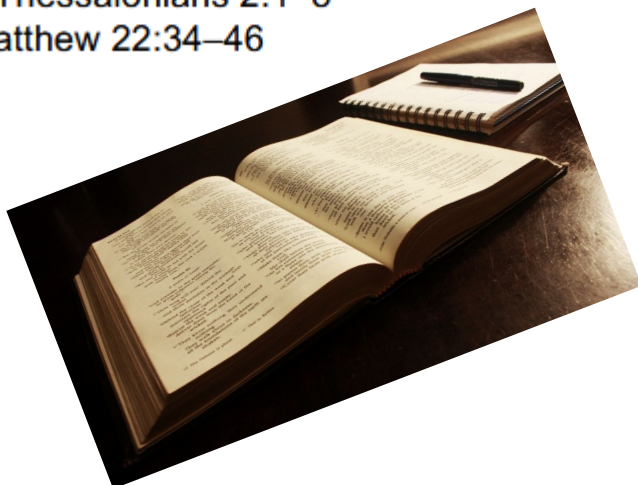
Complementary

Leviticus 19:1–2, 15–18

Psalm 1

1 Thessalonians 2:1–8

Matthew 22:34–46



Prayer Requests

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

Katie Bauman recovering from knee replacement surgery
Jackie Ford, John-Peter Ford's dad
Family of Laura Raizada in her recent passing
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
Karen Upton, Larry Green's mother
Faye Tripp's daughter, Holly

Also pray for those with longer term needs:

Tim Weiss
Leroy Kooiker, Hannah Luciano's grandpa
Kimberly Cundiff
Holly Durst, Lois Buttler's sister
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



October BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Birthdays:

10/1—Margie Baker

10/8—Bob Franks

10/9—Beth Hartwell

10/18—Aidan Collins

10/21—Mohan Raizada

10/22—Glenn Fischer

10/23—Jennifer Hemphill

10/24—Kathy Colverson

10/29—Elizabeth Harris

Anniversaries:

10/18—Sara & Keith Harris

10/30—Katie Bauman & Doug Hackett



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

Upcoming Events

If you have any events coming you would like to mention in Grace Notes, email Hannah at either office@gpconline.org or kooiha01@gmail.com.

\$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:

Lois Butler – 352-262-5893

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



Bible & Brew

Join Larry for Bible & Brew the **2nd & 4th Thursday (10/8 & 10/22)** 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.



Men's Noon Lunch & Fellowship

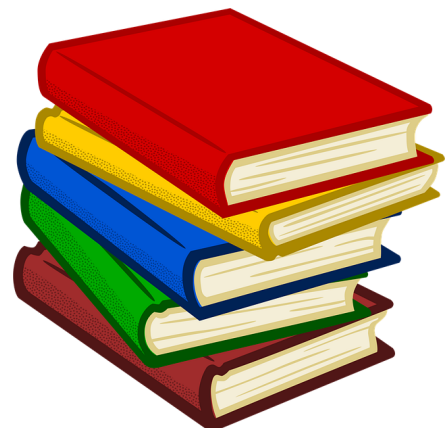


The men of the church are invited to meet each Wednesday from 11:00 noon to 1:00 pm in the library for fellowship. Please bring your own brown bag lunch, beverages will be provided.

Circle News

The Anna Circle will meet **Oct 13th** in the Library at Noon to discuss a new study with Anxious for Nothing by Max Lucado.

Next meeting will be **November 10th, 2026.**



October 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Girl Scouts 6:30pm– Gainesville Har- mony Show Chorus	2	3
4 Communion Sunday 9:45-Choir 11:00 Worship 7:00-ESWT(AA)	5 4:00 pm- Square Dancing Group	6 7:00 pm– Barbergators	7 11:00 pm– Men's Lunch 5-6:30 pm– OE Anonymous 7:00 pm– ESWT (AA)	8 7:00 pm– Bible & Brew at "University Club" 6:30pm– Gainesville Har-	9	10
11 9:45-Choir 11:00 Worship 7:00-ESWT(AA)	12 4:00 pm- Square Dancing Group	13 11:00 AM Congregation- al Life & Mis- sion Commit- tee 12:00 pm– Anna's Cir- cle 7:00 pm– Barbergators	14 11:00 pm– Men's Lunch 5-6:30 pm– OE Anonymous 7:00 pm– ESWT (AA)	15 Girl Scouts 6:30pm– Gainesville Harmony Show Chorus	16	17
18 9:45-Choir 11:00 Worship Worship Committee Christian Ed Com- mittee 7:00-ESWT(AA)	19 4:00 pm- Square Dancing Group	20 7:00 pm– Barbergators	21 11:00 pm– Men's Lunch 5-6:30 pm– OE Anonymous 7:00 pm– ESWT (AA)	22 7:00 pm– Bible & Brew at "University Club" 6:30pm– Gaines- ville Harmony Show	23	24
25 9:45-Choir 11:00 Worship Session Meet- ing 7:00-ESWT(AA)	26 4:00 pm- Square Dancing Group	27 7:00 pm– Barbergators	28 11:00 pm– Men's Lunch 5-6:30 pm– OE Anonymous 7:00 pm– ESWT (AA)	29 Girl Scouts 6:30pm– Gaines- ville Harmony Show	30	31 