

## CHURCH SESSION

### Class of 2023

Rosemary Gordon  
Sharon Ragghianti  
Becky Stirling

### Class of 2024

Akwi Lillian Aseh  
Susie Hayes  
Janet Vawter

Moderator: John Michael Krech  
Clerk: Becky Stirling  
Treasurer: Jere Lawson

### Class of 2025

Jere Lawson  
John Price  
Matthew Smith

## CHURCH STAFF

Pastor	John Michael Krech, jmkrech@yahoo.com
Organist/Choirmaster	Susan Steppe, susansteppe@comcast.net
Director Tech. Services/Instrumental Music	Bob Vawter, bvawter@bellsouth.net
Director of Children & Youth Ministry	Cristaldawn Smith, revmiss2002@yahoo.com
Nursery Attendants	Kathe Walker & Judy Thigpun
Financial Administrator/Admin Asst.	Betsy Lewis, eaclewis@yahoo.com
Sexton	Scott Hunter
Director of Grace Pres. Child Care	Jill Bailey, childcare@grace-pres.org

### Grace Presbyterian Church

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[www.grace-pres.org](http://www.grace-pres.org)

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Please consider Grace Presbyterian Church in your estate planning.



Grace Presbyterian Church is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA),  
Presbytery of the Mid-South, Synod of Living Waters.

# Grace Presbyterian Church

Worships God through Lessons and Carols at 11:00 a.m.

**December 17, 2023**

**Third Sunday in Advent**

## The Bell Calls Us to Worship

### Prelude

O Come, Let Us Adore Him arr. Arnold Sherman  
Grace Notes Hand Bell Choir

### Organ Voluntary

Sinfonia (from Messiah) G.F. Handel, 1742

The congregation stands to sing

### Hymn 1

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus Stuttgart

## Opening Sentences

**Pastor:** Our help is in the name of the Lord,  
**People:** **The Maker of heaven and earth.**  
**Pastor:** The Lord be with you.  
**People:** **And also with you.**  
**Pastor:** Let us pray.

**Prayer for the Day** (spoken by the pastor; the congregation joining the **Amen**.)  
Almighty God, you have made us and all things to serve you; now prepare the world for your rule. Come quickly to save us, so that wars and violence shall end and your children may live in peace, honoring one another with justice and love; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

The congregation sits.

## Lighting the Third Candle in the Advent Wreath

Tolu, Iyobosa, Jimi, and Toni Ayangbayi

At the conclusion of the candle lighting service, stand to sing:

**O come, Thou Key of *Da*-vid, come, And open wide our *heav'n*-ly home;  
Make safe the way that *leads* on high, And close the path to *mis*-ery.  
Rejoice; rejoice. *Emmanuel* shall come to thee, *O Is*-rael.**

**Pastor:** The peace of Christ be always with you.  
**People:** **And also with you.**

**Passing of the Peace** (Worshippers safely greet one another with the peace of Christ, and then sit for the announcements.)

## Welcome and Announcements

The children bring their ringing offering and come to the Chrismon tree for a  
**Time for Young Christians**

## Prayer for Illumination

Adam and Eve rebel against God and are cast out of the Garden of Eden.

**First Lesson** Genesis 3:1-15

**Psalm 126** Unison

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.  
Then our mouth was filled with laughter and our tongue with shouts of joy.  
Then it was said among the nations, The Lord has done great things for them.  
The Lord has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.  
Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the watercourses in the Negev.  
May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.  
Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing,  
shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

The prophet foresees the creation at peace.

**Second Lesson** Read by Becky Stirling Isaiah 11:1-9

The congregation stands to sing

**Hymn 48** Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming Es Ist Ein Ros'

The congregation sits.

God's Anointed establishes righteousness and comforts Zion.

**Third Lesson** Read by Suzanne Getman Isaiah 61:1-4,11

**Anthem** We Are Waiting Priscilla Lamparter Landis, 2023  
We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace. Sun of justice, shine upon us; we are trusting  
in your promise. Loving Shepherd, walk beside us; stir our hearts and gently guide us.  
(-- Jesus Brings Peace, John Helgen, 2013)

The Apostle Paul urges believers to give thanks and rejoice.

**Fourth Lesson** Read by Alaina Hurley 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

The congregation stands to sing

**O come, Thou Day-spring from on high, And cheer us by thy draw-ing nigh;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, And death's dark shadows put to flight.**  
Rejoice; rejoice. Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Is-rael.

The congregation sits.

An angel from God brings surprising good news to the parents of John the Baptist.

**Fifth Lesson** Read by Janet Vawter Luke 1:5-25

**Sermon** The Cause of, and Solution To, All of Life's Problems

"He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God." Luke 1:17

The congregation stands to sing

**Hymn 4** Creator of the Stars of Night Conditor Alme Siderum

**Apostles' Creed** Unison; Hymnal, page 14, Traditional

**Gloria in Excelsis** Refrain of Hymn 23 Gloria

The congregation sits.

St. Luke tells of the birth of Christ

**Sixth Lesson** Read by Akwi Lillian Aseh Luke 2:1-7

**The Bidding Prayer and the O Antiphons**

**The Lord's Prayer** (debts/debtors) Unison; Hymnal, page 16, Traditional

**Offertory Sentence**

**Offertory** Breath of Heaven (Mary's Song) Chris Eaton & Amy Grant  
with Lo, How a Rose a Rose E'er Blooming 15<sup>th</sup> century German carol;  
arr. Anna Laura Page

The congregation stands to sing the

**Doxology 592** Old Hundredth

**Benediction**

**Hymn 12** People, Look East Besancon

Worshippers are encouraged to be seated for the postlude,  
or you may depart the sanctuary quietly and quickly now if necessary.

You are welcome to sing along with the Hallelujah Chorus.

Please stand at the first appearance of the line, "King of kings and Lord of lords."

**Postlude** Hallelujah Chorus G.F. Handel, 1742

**Welcome to worship at Grace Presbyterian Church.**

Today we follow a worship pattern of lessons and carols, popularized beginning Christmas Eve,  
1918, at the chapel of King's College, Cambridge, England, and now used widely in Advent  
and at Christmas throughout the world.

Thanks to all our musicians for sharing their musical gifts to the glory of God, the good of the  
church, and the love of neighbor.

## Hymn Texts for Online Worship

### **Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus**

Come, Thou long-expected Jesus, Born to set Thy people free;  
From our fears and sins release us; Let us find our rest in Thee.

Israel's strength and consolation, Hope of all the world Thou art;  
Dear desire of every nation, Joy of every longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver, Born a child and yet a King,  
Born to reign in us forever, Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.

By Thine own eternal Spirit, Rule within our hearts alone;  
By Thine all-sufficient merit Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1744;

Tune: STUTTGART, Witt's *Psalmodia Sacra*, 1715; alt.

### **Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming**

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming From tender stem hath sprung,  
Of Jesse's lineage coming, By faithful prophets sung.

It came a floweret bright, Amid the cold of winter When half spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, The rose I have in mind,  
With Mary we behold it, The virgin mother kind.

To show God's love aright She bore for us a Savior, When half spent was the night.

Text: German carol, 15<sup>th</sup> century; Trans. Theodore Baker (1851-1934)

Alt. *Rejoice in the Lord*, 1985

Tune: ES IST EIN' ROS'; *Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengesang*, Cologne, 1599;

Arr. Michael Praetorius, 1609

### **Creator of the Stars of Night**

Creator of the stars of night, Your people's everlasting light,  
O Christ, Redeemer of us all, We pray You hear us when we call.

When this old world drew on toward night, You came, but not in splendor bright,  
Not as a monarch, but the child Of Mary, blameless mother mild.

At Your great name, O Jesus, now All knees must bend, all hearts must bow:  
All things on earth with one accord, Like those in heaven, shall call You Lord.

To God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit, Three in One,  
Praise, honor, might, and glory be From age to age eternally. Amen.

Text: Latin hymn, 9<sup>th</sup> century; Trans. John Mason Neale, 1851,  
as in *The Hymnal 1940*; alt.

Tune: CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM;

Sarum plainsong, Mode IV, 9<sup>th</sup> century; Harm. C. Winfred Douglas, 1943

### **People, Look East**

People, look east, The time is near Of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able, Trim the hearth and set the table.  
People, look east and sing today: Love the guest is on the way.

Furrows, be glad, Though earth is bare, One more seed is planted there:  
Give up your strength the seed to nourish, That in course the flower may flourish.  
People, look east and sing today: Love the rose is on the way.

Birds, thought you long have ceased to build, Guard the next that must be filled.  
Even the hour when wings are frozen God for fledging time has chosen.  
People, look east and sing today: Love the bird is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim One more light the bowl shall brim,  
Shining beyond the frosty weather, Bright as sun and moon together.  
People, look east and sing today: Love the star is on the way.

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth Christ who brings new life to earth.  
Set every peak and valley humming With the word, the Lord is coming.  
People, look east and sing today: Love the Lord is on the way.

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1928; As in *Oxford Book of Carols*, 1964;

Tune: BESANCON; French folk melody; Harm. Martin Shaw (1875-1958)