

## 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 at 11:00 a.m.

**December 24, 2023**

**Fourth Sunday in Advent**

## **The Bell Calls Us to Worship**

**Prelude** For Unto Us a Child Is Born (Messiah) G.F. Handel, 1742  
Arr. for organ by Lani Smith

The congregation stands to sing

**Hymn 14** Savior of the Nations, Come  
Nun Komm, Der Heider Heiland

## **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**.)  
God of grace, you chose the Virgin Mary, full of grace, to be the mother of our Lord and Savior. Now fill us with your grace, that with her, we may rejoice in your salvation, and in all things embrace your will; 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 Fourth Candle in the Advent Wreath**

John and Rosemary Gordon

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

**O come, O come, Thou Lord of might, Who to thy tribes on Si-nai's height  
In ancient times didst give the law, In cloud and majes-ty and awe.**

**Rejoice; rejoice. Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**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

### Old Testament

2 Samuel 7:1-11,16

### Psalm 89:1-4, 19b-21, 26

Unison

I will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, forever;  
with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.

I declare that your steadfast love is established forever;  
your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.

You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one;

I have sworn to my servant David:

'I will establish your descendants forever  
and build your throne for all generations.'

I have set the crown on one who is mighty;

I have exalted one chosen from the people.

I have found my servant David; with my holy oil I have anointed him;

My hand shall always remain with him; my arm also shall strengthen him.

He shall cry to me, 'You are my Father, my God,  
and the Rock of my salvation.'"

## Anthem

Breath of Heaven Chris Eaton and Amy Grant, 1992

I have traveled many moonless nights, cold and weary with a babe inside, And I wonder what I've done. Holy Father you have come and chosen me now to carry your Son. I am waiting in a silent prayer. I am frightened by the load I bear in a world as cold as stone, must I walk this path alone? Be with me now, Breath of Heaven. Hold me together, be forever near me. Lighten my darkness; Pour over me your holiness, for you are holy, Breath of Heaven. Do you wonder as you watch my face if a wiser one should have had my place. But I offer all I am for the mercy of your plan. Help me be strong.

Sung by Emily Mayne, Karen Schlichte, Susan Steppe

## Epistle

Romans 16:25-27

The congregation stands to sing

**Hymn 16** The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came Gabriel's Message

The congregation sits.

## Gospel

Luke 1:26-38

## Sermon

When an Angel Appears

Mike Krech

"In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man named Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary."

Luke 1:26-27

The congregation stands to sing

### Hymn 44

O Little Town of Bethlehem

St. Louis

### Apostles' Creed

Unison; Hymnal, page 14, Traditional

### Gloria in Excelsis

Refrain of Hymn 23

Gloria

The congregation sits.

## Pastoral Prayer of Thanksgiving, Intercession, and Dedication

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

## Offertory Sentence

**Offertory** Trio on Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella

Traditional French Carol

Arr. David H. Hegarty

The congregation stands to sing the

## Doxology 592

Old Hundredth

## Benediction

### Hymn 9

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Veni Emmanuel

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

## Postlude

Festal Fanfare from the Fourth Concerto

J.S. Bach

Arr. Van Denman Thompson

## Welcome to worship at Grace Presbyterian Church.

Today is the fourth Sunday in Advent, and the season of preparation and anticipation concludes with the Annunciation by the angel Gabriel to Mary that she would bear a son. (JMK)

## Hymn Texts for Online Worship

### **Savior of the Nations, Come**

Savior of the nations, come, Virgin's Son, make here Your home.  
Marvel now, O heaven and earth, That the Lord chose such a birth.

From the Godhead forth You came, And return unto the same,  
Captive leading death and hell, High the song of triumph swell!

You, the chosen Holy One, Have o'er sin the victory won.  
Boundless shall Your kingdom be; When shall we its glories see?

Brightly does Your manger shine, Glorious is its light divine.  
Let not sin o'er-cloud this light; Ever be our faith thus bright.

Text: Attr. Ambrose of Milan, 4<sup>th</sup> century; Para. Martin Luther, 1524;

Trans. William Morton Reynolds, 1850;

Tune: NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND; Based on plainsong melody  
*Eyr Enchiridion*, Erfurt, 1524 As in *Songs of Syon*, 1910

### **The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came**

The angel Gabriel from heaven came, His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;  
"All hail," said he, "O lowly maiden Mary," Most highly favored lady, Gloria!

"For know a blessed mother you shall be, All generations praise continually,  
Your Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold." Most highly favored lady, Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head, "To me be as it pleases God," she said,  
"My soul shall laud and magnify God's holy name." Most highly favored lady, Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,  
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:

Most highly favored lady, Gloria!

Text: Para. Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924)

Tune: GABRIEL'S MESSAGE; Basque carol;

Arr. by Edgar Pettman and John Wickham

### **O Little Town of Bethlehem**

O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see Thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.  
For Christ is born of Mary; And gathered all above,  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep Their watch of wondering love.  
O morning stars, together Proclaim the holy birth!  
And praises sing to God the King, And peace to all on earth.  
How silently, how silently, The wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts The blessings of His heaven,  
No ear may hear His coming, But in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive Him, still The dear Christ enters in.  
O holy child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin and enter in, Be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel.

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1868;

Tune: ST. LOUIS; Lewis Henry Rudner, 1868

### **O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**

O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.  
O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer Our spirits by Thine advent here;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, And death's dark shadows put to flight.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.  
O come, Desire of nations, bind All peoples in one heart and mind;  
Bid envy, strife, and discord cease; Fill the whole world with heaven's peace.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.

Text: Latin, c.12<sup>th</sup> century;

Stanzas 1-2 trans. John Mason Neale, 1851; alt. 1854;

Stanza 3 trans. Henry Sloane Coffin, 1916;

Tune: VENI EMMANUEL;

Adapt. Thomas Helmore, 1854; Accomp. John Weaver, 1988