



GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

— TEMPLE, TEXAS —



2401 S 57TH STREET
TEMPLE, TX 76504
254.773.2134
DECEMBER 2024

FROM THE DESK OF REV. THOM LAMB

An elder from the church was making an annual stewardship visit to a member of the church. The following is an excerpt from that conversation:

Elder: Hello, we were wondering if you would like to contribute a little of your money to the church?

Member: Sure, I would. How little are we talking about?

It is time for our annual Stewardship campaign! I know this sets everyone's hearts on fire. The truth is, it is important. There are a number of reasons it is important. It is not about the building, though the building needs some updates and repairs, and ongoing expenses. It is not about staff raises, although taking care of the staff of the church is important stewardship. It is not about program or mission, even though these things are critical for the life and health of our church. It is important because it is about our commitment. Our commitment to Jesus Christ as disciples, and our commitment to this faith community we call Grace Presbyterian Church.

In the Sermon on the Mount in the gospel of Matthew, Jesus lays out three very distinct disciplines of the Christian life; prayer, fasting and almsgiving. (see Matthew 6:1-21) Jesus warns that this is not fodder for us to boast about; rather it is an act of commitment, done in secret, to the glory of God.

Now I know I am preaching to the choir here. Historically, Grace Presbyterian Church has been extremely generous in their giving. In fact, this year alone people have expressed their commitment in a phenomenal way through increased giving.

The challenge for us is to look, not at our checkbooks, but into our hearts. The challenge for us is not to see what we can afford to give, but to see that as a disciple of Jesus Christ, we can't afford not to give. I want to challenge you to take this beyond the dollars and cents. In a couple of weeks, we will be sending you a pamphlet that has been prepared for the 2012 Stewardship campaign. It is entitled "Seven days to a Faithful Response." This pamphlet is designed for us all to engage in discerning our financial gifts for the coming year on a spiritual level. In addition it is a challenge for those of us who are able, to discern where we can offer the gifts we have been given to build up the ministries of the church with our time and talent.

It is an exciting time in the life of Grace Presbyterian Church! Being good stewards of all that God has given us will enable us to seek new horizons and continue to provide a living witness to the Grace of Jesus Christ in this community. I urge you to join me over the next few weeks to prayerfully consider your response.

See you in church on Sunday!

CHRISTMAS Cantata

Handel's Christmas Messiah

A Cantata for worship will be performed by our choir on Sunday, December 8 in our 11AM Worship. Our choir will also be joined by professional soloists from the community and an instrumental ensemble. Bring your family & friends!

GRACE
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PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

All women of the Church and their guest are invited to **Presbyterian Women's Annual Christmas Celebration** on Sunday, December 8, at 3PM in the Fellowship Hall. There will be light refreshments, holiday fellowship and a very special program, presented by Rev. Thom Lamb on 'Moments of Gratitude'. For any questions, please feel free to contact a member of the Presbyterian Women or call the church office.

MEN OF GRACE

Men's Breakfast! Saturday, December 21 • 9AM • Fellowship Hall • Program details coming! All men are welcome! Come for a good meal and fellowship • Join us every third Saturday of the month at 9AM in the Fellowship Hall. Questions? Email Stan (stanb4simons@gmail.com) or Bob (bshull612@gmail.com) for questions.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Children's Sunday School - K-5 Sunday School at 9:30AM - pickup at 10:45AM in room 204.



NO SUNDAY SCHOOL DECEMBER 29. Children's Sunday School will resume in the New Year on January 5.

Parent's Night Out is **Friday, December 6** • 5:30-8:30PM • For families who are members or regular attenders of the church and for their children (*infants 6 weeks through 5th grade*) Childcare is provided by our GPC nursery staff • **Register by November 27** on our website!

ADMINISTRATION

Church offices will be closed December 23 - January 1, 2025. Regular office hours will resume on Thursday, January 2. Regular office hours are Monday thru Thursday from 8AM - 4PM; Closed on Friday. The staff wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

ADULT EDUCATION

Adult Sunday Class - *The Gathering Sunday School class* will begin an Advent Study entitled **FAITHFUL - Christmas through the eyes of Joseph** by Adam Hamilton. We will begin the first Sunday in Advent, December 1 at 9:30AM in the library. Hope to see you there. **We will not meet on December 29.**

MISSION STUDY ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS

The Mission Study Committee is eager to hear from you! As we work to understand and define our church's mission and priorities, we invite all members to join us for a round table discussion. These conversations are an essential part of our mission study process, allowing us to gather insights and ideas that will help guide our mission and vision.

When & Where? We will hold two sessions on each of the following Sundays:

- December 8 or December 15
- During Sunday School and again immediately after the worship service at 12:15PM in the Fellowship Hall

This is a wonderful opportunity to share your hopes, concerns, and priorities for our church community. The more participation we have, the better our shared vision will be. We look forward to hearing from you! Please contact Joshua Essary if you have any questions by email joshuaessary@gmail.com or by phone 254-228-9505.

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

The perfect gift -- JESUS -- destined to lead us and bring joy, peace and salvation. Supporting the Christmas Joy Offering honors God's gift of Jesus Christ by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Envelopes are located in the pews for giving.



MEMBER OF THE MONTH!

December Member of the Month is Dave and Sharon Tullis. Let's shower them with cards by sending to: 2618 Marlandwood Circle, Temple, TX 76502. Don't have a card? We have one for you in the narthex! Fill it out and drop it in the office and we will mail it for you!

STAFF APPRECIATION/ CHRISTMAS BONUS

PASTOR THOM FAREWELL GIFT

This year we're doing things differently. The congregation is not being solicited for the Staff Appreciation/Christmas Bonus, but instead that money will come from the "over and above" fund. We do though want to give Thom a monetary farewell gift. If you wish to contribute please write "Thom Farewell" on the memo line of your check. Deadline for contributions is **Sunday, December 8, 2024.**

Thank you,
John Bowling
Personnel Committee

TEMPLE CIVIC THEATRE NIGHT!

Join us for the Premier Performance of "Hometown Holidays". This fun night is Thursday, December 12. Appetizers/beverages are at 6:30PM. Curtain time is at 7:30PM. Please sign up in the narthex under the membership board, then make your reservations by phone or online directly to TCT. Tickets: \$25 for adults; ask about special rates for children/students/seniors.

MUSIC MINISTRY

Join us Sunday, December 8 in the 11AM Worship • The Chancel Choir presents *Handel's Messiah: A Cantata for Worship*, joined by professional soloists from the community and an instrumental ensemble.

Holiday Schedule:

- Tuesday, November 26: 6-8PM - Choir Rehearsal (Because of the Thanksgiving Holiday, the choir will rehearse Tuesday rather than Wednesday this week)
- Tuesday, December 3: 6-8PM - Messiah Instrumental Ensemble Rehearsal in Sanctuary
- Wednesday, December 4: 6-8PM - Messiah Dress Rehearsal with Chancel Choir, soloists, and instrumentalists in the Sanctuary
- Wednesday, December 11: 6-7PM - Choir Rehearsal
- Wednesday, December 18: 6-8PM - Music Ministry Christmas Party at the home of Bill and Carla Stanley
- No Choir or Bell Rehearsals on December 25 or January 1. Rehearsals resume January 8.

Handbell Ensemble is directed by Josh Essary - joshuaessary@gmail.com

Chancel Choir is directed by Chelsea Stern, Minister of Music - chelsea@gpctemple.org

For more information about Grace Music Ministry visit our webpage at <https://www.gpctemple.org/>



MIZPAH MINISTRY

Mizpah ministry is a ministry based in Kenya to help elevate the lives of widows. We set two mission projects each year: One in June and one in December. For December 2024, we project to build 1.) 30 houses at \$3000 each; 2.) 15 chicken coups at \$500 each; 3.) 60 water tanks at \$200 each. We also give groceries during home visits and Christmas gifts. Finally, we help to pay tuition in high school and college of \$2000. We have and are grateful for any contributions given to cover all of these costs. Nothing is too little. One can designate where they wish for their donation to be used. All donations are tax exempt. Ways you can give: 1.) write a check to Grace Presbyterian Church and mark 'Mizpah' on the memo line; 2.) give thru Paypal: mizpahwidowsprojects; 3.) Zelle - mizpahwidows@gmail.com; 4.) Venmo - @Mizpah-widows

MEALS ON WHEELS



Cooks and drivers needed! Recipes and supplies provided • Requires minimal time to provide a healthy meal to someone who is unable to help themselves • Sign up for as much or as little as you can serve • Contact Peg Spangler (254.231.5205 or pspang5665@gmail.com) if able to help.

POINSETTIA TIME We will be decorating the Sanctuary with poinsettias! If you would like to donate a plant in memory/honor of loved ones, please fill out a form located at the end of each pew or in the narthex. Please return your form, along with your cash/check donation in the offering plate. Any donations given above will go to CTLC (*Churches Touching Lives for Christ*). **Deadline to order is December 15.**

PLEDGE CARDS/END OF YEAR GIVING

Thank you to those that have turned in your 2025 pledge cards! If you have not, we are asking that you prayerfully consider your ability to financially support GPC and turn in your pledge card as soon as possible. Extra pledge cards are available in the narthex for your convenience. Any pre-paid pledges for 2025 need to be noted specifically for 2025 clarification. All giving for 2024 will need to be **RECEIVED** and **dated no later that December 31**. Thank you for being a cheerful giver!



PCHAS ANGEL TREE

If you drew a name on the tree to provide gifts for children, please return the gifts with the tags **unwrapped** by **Sunday, December 8**. Thank you for helping these children have a blessed Christmas!



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

• Bill Stanley	12/4
• Maretta Deiterman	12/5
• TerryLynn Schrimsher	12/8
• Martha Tabarlet	12/8
• Jill Mooney	12/9
• William Bryant	12/10
• Nan Knight	12/10
• Bobby Bulls	12/11
• Cindy Bankston	12/13
• Immanueli Mwaura	12/15
• Dan Stephens	12/15
• Tom Langthorn	12/18
• Lori Lamb	12/22
• Meredith Wood	12/22
• Nicholas Arnoudse	12/23
• Maren Palmer	12/23
• Bill Benner	12/24
• Marilyn Burres	12/26
• Pat Wilkinson-Powell	12/27
• Renee Quinn	12/27
• David Nickerson	12/28
• Becky Brown	12/29

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2401 S. 57TH STREET

TEMPLE, TX 76504

WWW.GPCTEMPLE.ORG

IN PERSON & ONLINE WORSHIP:

9:30AM SUNDAY SCHOOL

10:30AM COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

11 AM WORSHIP

CHILDCARE AVAILABLE



Watch our services on YouTube, Facebook or our website.

Click the links above or visit us:

Facebook: @gpctemple • Online: www.gpctemple.org

PLACE LABEL HERE



Merry Christmas

from Grace Presbyterian

HOLIDAY UPCOMINGS...

- December 8** Advent II—GPC Choir/Chamber orchestra present
"Messiah: A Christmas Cantata" in 11AM worship
- December 15** Handbell Ensemble in 11AM worship
- December 24** Christmas Eve Candlelight & Communion Worship
6PM (childcare available)
- Dec 23-Jan 1** Church offices closed
- December 29** Christmas Lessons & Carols Service at 11AM
(no childcare, Sunday School or choir)

Dear Friends,

We want to thank you for a wonderful evening you gave us! We were overwhelmed by so many who came to celebrate my retirement. Thank you for the lovely cards and good wishes. As I have said time and time again, GPC has been a true church home for me. You all have blessed my family in so many ways, I can't thank you enough. I wish you peace and grace.

Faithfully,
Thom and Lori Lamb



GPC STAFF

Rev. Thom Lamb
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Current office hours:
Mon- Thursdays
8AM- 4PM