



M Grace Messenger

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

122 Walnut Street
Madison, AL 35758
256-837-8821

GBC HOMEPAGE

<http://www.gracemadison-al.com>

"Preaching the free grace of God which brings a change of lifestyles, masters, and destinies."

DEAN OLIVE, Pastor

— November 2007 Issue —

"We should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter" (Romans 7:6).



NURSERY SCHEDULE

NOVEMBER

- 04 Jon and Tanya Amis
- 11 David and Mary Alice Olive
- 18 Nellie and Hannah McFadden
- 25 Linda Olive and Sonja Williams

DECEMBER

- 02 Troy and Jessica Moseley
- 09 Vicki Johnson and Sharon Bagley
- 16 Bob and Faye Williams
- 23 Kristy Hines and Jenny Lovassy
- 30 Linda Olive and Sonja Williams

FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF NOVEMBER 1, 2007

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$ 84,856.67
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 69,130.40
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 42,827.47
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$118,589.45
Building Fund offerings (ytd)	\$ 0.00
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 5,633.95
Total offerings (ytd)	\$124,223.40
October General Fund offerings	\$ 12,006.10
October Building Fund offerings	\$ 0.00
Building Fund balance	\$ 26,501.73
Missions Fund balance	\$ 4,842.52
General Fund balance	\$ 17,588.61



THE ART OF THANKSGIVING

Once a year, a holiday rolls around called Thanksgiving. We remember on that day to give thanks to God for a bountiful meal, for a house full of family and friends, and for a good year. And we should. These are all things that God, as a loving Father, is pleased to give us.

At other times and in other, less joyful situations, it may not be as easy to be thankful, even though we are asked to give thanks to God for everything, in all circumstances (1 Thess. 5:18). God is pleased to overrule and work even through the tragedies caused by sin's presence in the world to accomplish His will in the lives of those who love Him and who have been called according to His purpose (Rom. 8:28).

So as the Thanksgiving holiday approaches, begin to practice the art of thanksgiving. Make this a month of giving thanks. Every evening, as you recount the events of your day, give thanks to God for the good things and for the good that He has promised to bring out of the hard things, and especially give thanks for His sending Christ to save us. It may just become a lifelong habit.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

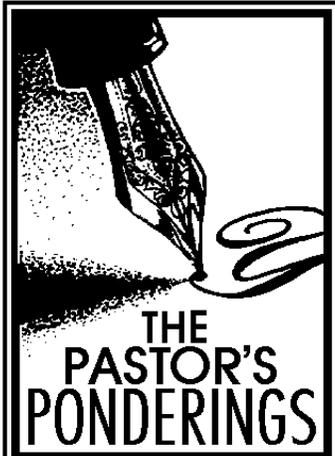
Morning Worship	9:30 AM
Sunday School	11:00 AM
Evening Worship	6:00 PM

WEDNESDAY EVENING

Bible Study and Prayer Meeting	7:00 PM
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FIRST SUNDAY SERVICES

Morning Worship	9:30 AM
Sunday School	11:00 AM
Dinner at the Church	12:00 Noon
Afternoon Service	1:30 PM
(No Evening Service)	



GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD

Robert Murray Mc'Cheyne once said, "Unthankfulness is in our nature." And so it is. We have to be taught the attitude of gratitude; we are not thankful by nature.

Luke 17:11-19 brings to the fore the sin of thanklessness. Ten lepers received a blessed gift from Christ, the healing of their bodies, but only one returned to offer Him thanks. The others went on their merry way to enjoy the gift they received without stopping to say "thanks." Only one had a thankful heart.

Jesus had compassion toward the lepers. They cried to Him for mercy, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us," and he responded to their plea. They needed help and they had heard that Jesus could and would help the needy. What the lepers sought, they found. They asked for mercy and they received it. Jesus healed them! Luke, the physician, actually says they were "cleansed" (vv.14, 17). The unclean became clean and pure.

Imagine that you were one of the ten. Your body, which was covered with sores, in a split-second, was made clean. What would you do? Dance? Sing? Shout? Cry? Clap your leprosy-free hands? Probably. But surely the one thing you would certainly do is thank the one who made you well. Right? Sadly, that didn't happen.

Only one of the ten returned to give Jesus thanks; only one. Only one appreciated the gift of cleansing enough to go back and fall on his face before the Lord Jesus and give him thanks. Nine men, who received great blessing from the hand of Christ, were ungrateful.

How often have we received blessing from the Lord and yet failed to stop and offer a sacrifice of praise and thanks to God! What an example the one cleansed leper is to us. He returned; he glorified God; he fell on his face at the feet of Jesus; he poured out his heart in thanks to Christ.

God's mercy should lead people to offer thanks. Yet too often his mercy is ignored and unappreciated. Dear

friends, we must not take God's blessings for granted. "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" (Ps. 107:8, 15, 21, 31). "Too often we are content to enjoy the gift but we forget the Giver. We are quick to pray but slow to praise" (Wiersbe).

The reception of mercy from God should bring out thanksgiving to God. Whatever God does for us calls for gratitude. An unthankful heart is a great sin, yet ingratitude is as common a sin as there is. Thanklessness is wide-spread and is the disgrace of our day. George Whitefield called ingratitude "a high crime."

So few who receive blessing from the hand of God are thankful. We receive thousands upon thousands of blessings from God but are we thankful? Are we more like the nine rather than the one? "We are more ready to pray than to praise, and more disposed to ask God for what we have not, than to thank Him for what we have" (Ryle). If the statistics in this passage are representative, then only one out of ten give God thanks for the blessings they receive.

Thomas Watson said, "To have a thankful heart for deliverance is a greater blessing than the deliverance itself." God has delivered us from many ills; he has abundantly provided our needs; he has given us a Savior who cleansed us from all our sins. A perusal of the Bible will provide you a long list of reasons to be thankful. An examination of your life will give you more reasons why you ought to be thankful.

After writing about letting the peace of God rule in your hearts, Paul added this simple rejoinder, "And be thankful" (Col. 3:15). Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thess. 5:18).

May God help us to be thankful. May we offer to God every day "the sacrifice of praise to God... giving thanks to his name" (Heb. 13:15). "O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever" (Psa. 107:1).

WEB SITES



JONATHAN EDWARDS CENTER –
<http://edwards.yale.edu/>

ENJOYING GOD MINISTRIES –
www.enjoyinggodministries.com/

BROWSE THE BIBLE (ESV LITERARY STUDY BIBLE) -
www.esvliterarystudybible.org/browse

MARTIN LLOYD-JONES RECORDINGS TRUST –
www.mlj-usa.com/

ANNE DUTTON'S LETTERS ON SPIRITUAL SUBJECTS -
www.gracegems.org/Dutton/Dutton.htm

ESV HOME PAGE –
<http://www.esv.org/about/intro>



NOVEMBER 4 – Miles McKee, a preacher from Belfast, Northern Ireland, who is now living in Franklin, TN, is scheduled to preach in the morning worship hour and will teach the Adult Sunday School class [<http://milesckee.com/index.htm>]. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper will be observed in the afternoon service.

NOVEMBER 11 – Bob Marsh begins a five-week Sunday School series on the Trinity.

NOVEMBER 16 – The Ladies of Grace will meet on Friday, November 16, from 10:30 a.m. till noon (d.v.). There will be no meeting in December. The next scheduled meeting is January 18.

NOVEMBER 21 – A Thanksgiving Prayer Meeting

DECEMBER 2 – Ben Holland, assistant pastor of Grace Community Church and son-in-law to Steven and Leah Drake, will be preaching in the afternoon service (d.v.).

DECEMBER 16 – Providence Presbyterian Church will be joining us for a Christmas meal at 5 p.m. Following the meal we will have a joint worship service consisting of Christmas hymns and a message from God's Word.

DECEMBER 23 AND 30 – There will be no Sunday School on these two days.

COMMUNION WITH THE TRIUNE GOD

“Communion with the Triune God” is the title of a five-week Sunday School series, which will be taught by Bob Marsh, beginning November 11. The God of the Bible is a personal God that is one, but who also is revealed in three persons. This series of lessons will explore the practical relevance of the Trinity to the Christian in today's world.

QUESTION #94 – “Are the infants of professing believers to be baptized?”

ANSWER – “The infants of professing believers are not to be baptized, because there is neither command nor example in the Holy Scriptures, nor certain inference from them, to baptize such.”

SCRIPTURE – Deuteronomy 12:32; Proverbs 30:6; Acts 8:12; 10:47-48

COMMENT – “First-order symbolism of baptism is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Receiving baptism gives testimony that one accepts the position of Jesus as Son of God and as Lamb of God and recognizes his sacrifice as the only means by which sin may be forgiven... The only ones who receive baptism are those who hear the gospel and believe. We can point to no person who, when he or she received baptism, was not fully instructed in the gospel material concerning the life, death, and resurrection of Christ” (Tom Nettles).

ILLUSTRATION – “How and why did infant baptism ever get started in the first place? One does not have to look long for the answer. Infant baptism began when the majority church departed from the biblical doctrine of salvation by grace, and by grace alone, and began to teach that baptism is a work that is necessary for salvation. Simple logic forced the next step. If one cannot be saved without water baptism then it is imperative that baptism be administered as soon as possible after the child is born, lest without baptism the child dies and goes to hell. That, by the way, is still the position of the Roman Catholic Church today” (Orville Kool).

THEOLOGY



CORNER

A REFORMED AND
BAPTIST CATECHISM



Puritan Gems

DIVINE AND HOLY AFFECTIONS RAISED

JONATHAN EDWARDS

“Some are ready to condemn all high affections: if persons appear to have their religious affections raised to an extraordinary pitch, they are prejudiced against them, and determine that they are delusions, without further inquiry. But if it be as has been proved, that true religion lies very much in religious affections, then it follows, that if there be a great deal of true religion, there will be great religious affections; if true religion in the hearts of men, be raised to a great height, divine and holy affections will be raised to a great height” (*The Religious Affections*).

THE MORNING STAR OF WITTENBERG

KATHARINA VON BORA LUTHER

The reformer Martin Luther said he married for several reasons: to make his father happy, to rile the pope, make the angels laugh and the devil weep, and to seal his testimony. He made no mention of romantic love; in fact, one of Luther's biographers suggested he could have just as well have married a plank. But Katharina von Bora was anything but a plank. Luther had no idea what he was getting himself into.

Katharina grew up in a German convent. She was placed in the care of the nuns when she was five years old, just after the death of her mother and her father's remarriage. We can only imagine how frightening it must have been for little Katharina to be suddenly removed from her home into such an austere environment. After four years, her father transferred her to a different convent, where two of her aunts were already cloistered. There, Katharina learned reading, writing and some Latin. At 16, she took the vows of a nun. She had little choice—her father did not want her to come home, and there were few other options available to a woman in 1515.

Over the next few years, Katharina would hear rumors of great things happening in Germany. In 1517 Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg to protest the Catholic Church practice of selling indulgences—letters endorsed by the Pope that purportedly granted forgiveness of sins. Luther taught that forgiveness of sins came from grace alone as a free gift from God through faith alone—not mediated through the church but directly from God. He also proclaimed that Scripture alone should be the rule to which we give our allegiance. Luther's teaching spread like wildfire throughout Europe, causing many monks and nuns to renounce their vows and common people to leave the Catholic Church. Finally, Katharina and the other nuns heard that Luther had been excommunicated from the Catholic Church, and that his life was in danger.

In the next few years, Luther's writings found their way into Katharina's convent. God opened the eyes of nine of the nuns (including Katharina) to understand that justification before God came through faith in Christ and by grace. They could no longer in good conscience live in the convent and go through the motions of confession to a priest or perform penance for the remission of sins. They secretly contacted Luther, who arranged for the women to be smuggled out in a tradesman's wagon on the night before Easter, 1523. If captured, both the women and the tradesman would have been executed. Luther and his associates placed the women with reformed families in Wittenberg, and gradually arranged marriages for all but Katharina. She lived for two years with a family in Reichenbach, where she learned house-keeping. She fell in love with one man who rejected her for a wealthy woman. Then she rejected a Dr. Glatz, whom Luther suggested she marry. Instead, she sent a message to Luther that she would marry either him or his associate, Dr. Amsdorf. Katharina was determined to marry not just the first available man, but a man whom she respected.



To everyone's surprise, the 42-year-old Luther agreed to marry 26-year-old Katie. Luther's life changed dramatically after his marriage. Katie was a force to be reckoned with. She rose at 4 am in the summer and 5 am in the winter to oversee the workings of their large home and farm. Luther jokingly dubbed her the Morning Star of Wittenberg. She learned to do everything—paying the bills, gardening, raising livestock, running the household and even brewing beer for

family use. And what a family it was! Luther and Katharina had six children and adopted eleven more. At any given time, university students, refugees and homeless relatives lived with them. The former abbey they lived in had 40 rooms, but usually few were empty. Katharina was called to provide care for the sick and to support her husband through ailments both physical and spiritual. Even under all this pressure, Luther described his wife as “compliant, accommodating, and affable beyond anything I dared hope.” He jokingly said, “In domestic affairs, I defer to Katie. Otherwise I am led by the Holy Ghost.”

Katharina curbed Luther's reckless side, begging him to stay home instead of undertaking dangerous journeys. She also curbed his generosity a bit and appealed to him to think of his family before letting money slip through his fingers. She took a lively interest in her husband's affairs and was not reticent about advising him. This occasionally rankled Luther, who would then refer to his Katie as “My Lord” or “My Chain.” But on the whole, domestic life was sweet in the Luther household. This freed the reformer to write, teach, travel and to preach an average of 150 times a year. Katharina's contribution to the reformation was behind the scenes—supporting and challenging her husband and caring for her family. Katharina provided a new example of what it means to be a woman dedicated to God—not cloistered in a convent but unselfishly serving her family and the church.

Luther died in 1546, and Katharina two years later. Her last words were, “I will stick to Christ as a burr on a top coat.” Thus she ended her extraordinary life, determined and depending on Christ alone.

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