



# Grace Messenger

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



## NURSERY SCHEDULE

### OCTOBER

- 07 Linda Olive and Sonja Williams
- 14 Vicki Johnson and Sharon Bagley
- 21 Bob and Faye Williams
- 28 Kristy Hines and Jenny Lovassy

### NOVEMBER

- 04 Jon and Tanya Amis
  - 11 David and Mary Alice Olive
  - 18 Nellie and Hannah McFadden
  - 25 Troy and Jessica Moseley
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## FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF OCTOBER 1, 2007

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$ 76,371.00
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 69,130.40
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 37,727.47
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$106,616.83
Building Fund offerings (ytd)	\$ 0.00
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 5,633.95
Total offerings (ytd)	\$112,250.78
September General Fund offerings	\$ 11,110.48
September Building Fund offerings	\$ 0.00
Building Fund balance	\$ 24,008.48
Missions Fund balance	\$ 9,817.76
General Fund balance	\$ 14,701.31

## 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

— October 2007 Issue —

## THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

The Reformation under men like Wycliffe, Hus, Zwingli, Tyndale, Luther and Calvin, solidified the Biblical doctrines of the faith, recapturing the true faith from the Roman Catholic Church's counterfeit faith. The content of this victorious reaffirmation of biblical doctrine can be summed up in the five slogan terms of the Reformation.

**Solus Christus** (Christ alone). It is only through the work of Jesus Christ alone that we may be saved. Salvation is based solely on the merit of Christ's atoning death on the cross.

**Sola Scriptura** (Scripture alone). The Scriptures are the final authority for all matters pertaining to the Christian faith. A man's conscience may never be bound by human inventions or traditions, but only by the Word of God alone.

**Sola Gratia** (grace alone). God is never obliged to save anyone. He acts completely by mercy and grace on those who are undeserving.

**Sola Fide** (faith alone). It is through faith in Christ that sinners are justified. One cannot mix works and faith for salvation. Faith alone, as a gift given by Christ, is the instrumental means of justification.

**Soli Deo Gloria** (Glory to God alone). God shall be glorified by the saint and the sinner. All that men do will ultimately be for His glory.

## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

### NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

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

### 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)	

### WEDNESDAY EVENING

Bible Study and Prayer Meeting	7:00 PM
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# WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

By Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones

**B**ut, let us just take another glance at these people, and just ask a few questions as to how this life, this wonderful unity, this wonderful life, shows itself. The first way in which it always shows itself is this – that they have a love of the same doctrine always: “They continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine” (Acts 2:42). Doctrine before fellowship, doctrine before breaking of bread, doctrine before prayer. It is the reverse today, is it not?

Fellowship is the greatest thing. “Let us all get together; let us all pray together.” No, no! Doctrine first. Why? Well, this is inevitable. A man who has got something of the life of God in his soul is always the man who desires to know the teaching and doctrine. Peter uses this as a comparison: “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:2). How do you know that that little child that has been born is a live child and not a dead birth? The answer is, the live child makes for the milk, every young animal does the same; it makes for the food. Its nature demands it, cries out for it. And the man who is born again is a man who wants teaching.

I want to ask some plain questions here tonight – I am addressing evangelical people. Do you enjoy doctrine? Are you interested in teaching? I sometimes hear from my brethren that they visit churches where a limit is put on the length of their sermon, and indeed on the content of their sermon. The people say they can’t follow doctrine, they are bored by doctrine. They want entertainment, they want more singing, they want more “happiness”, they say – and they do not want doctrine.

Now I am free to admit that a man may preach doctrine in such a dull manner that it really is boring. I am making no defense of that. But I am here to say this, that unless you have got a desire within you to know of this precious blessed Truth, you cannot be a child of God: it is impossible. The child craves for it, as the babe always makes for the milk.

How vitally important this is for us in every department of our lives. Do you not see the dangers? Look at the false teachings round about us. How can I be safe with regard to these unless I have got an objective standard?

Take all this emphasis upon experience. People say “I don’t care what you believe as long as you have had an experience, or your life has been changed, or you are a good and a kind man”, and so on. But, my dear friends, the cults can talk like that, and they do talk like that. How do you know that you are right and that that man who is selling you those books at your front door is not right? How do you prove it? It is no use saying, “Well, I have had an experience.” He says he has had one. It is no use saying, “I am zealous in my church.” He is. He gives up watching football on Saturday afternoons to go round from house to house to sell his books. He is very zealous, probably more than you are. How do you tell whether a man is right or wrong? You cannot in terms of zeal and enthusiasm or experience. There is only one ultimate test – objective Truth. The teaching! The doctrine! So this is the thing that is put first.

And then you come to fellowship; but you cannot have fellowship unless you are agreed. “Can two walk together except they be agreed?” How can you ever have real fellowship with a man when you know that he does not believe in the Deity of Christ and His atoning sacrifice? It is impossible. Fellowship is based upon Truth.

“Breaking of bread.” What are we commemorating in our Communion Service? Is it the death of a pacifist? Is it a tragedy that once took place? You cannot partake truly at the Table with a man who holds such views. Doctrine is essential in fellowship and breaking of bread.

And to prayer. They say, “We can all pray together. We do not agree perhaps, but we can all pray together.” But you cannot. What is prayer? How do you get access to God? One man says that all you need to do is to sit on a comfortable chair and relax and start listening to God. My friends there is only one way to enter into the holiest of all, there is only one way to pray – it is “by the blood of Jesus.”

... and there we see them “continuing steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer.”

(part of an address delivered at a conference in 1969)

## WEB SITES

EGLISE RÉFORMÉE BAPTISTE DU GRÉSIVAUDAN –

[www.eglise-rb-grenoble.fr/](http://www.eglise-rb-grenoble.fr/)

ENJOYING GOD MINISTRIES –

[www.enjoyinggodministries.com/](http://www.enjoyinggodministries.com/)

ETERNAL LIFE MINISTRIES –

[www.eternallifeministries.org/](http://www.eternallifeministries.org/)

GRACE GEMS –

[www.gracegems.org/](http://www.gracegems.org/)

MILES MCKEE MINISTRIES –

<http://milesmckee.com/index.htm>



QUESTION #93 – “To whom is Baptism to be administered?”

ANSWER – “Baptism is to be administered to all those who credibly profess repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and to none other.”

SCRIPTURE – Acts 2:38, 41; Matthew 3:6; 28:19-20; Mark 16:16; Acts 8:12, 36-37; 10:47-48.

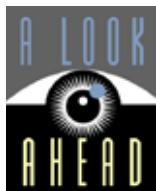
## THEOLOGY CORNER



A REFORMED AND BAPTIST CATECHISM

COMMENT – “The pattern revealed at several places in the New Testament is that only those who give a believable profession of faith should be baptized. This view is often called ‘believers’ baptism,’ since it holds that only those who have themselves believed in Christ (or, more precisely, those who have given reasonable evidence of believing in Christ) should be baptized. This is because baptism, which is a *symbol of beginning the Christian life* should only be given to those who have *in fact* begun the Christian life” (Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*).

ILLUSTRATION – A minister was seeking to explain the significance of baptism to a new convert. He was gesturing as he talked and noticed that as he was using his hand its shadow fell on the ground. So he said to the convert, “Do you see the shadow of my hand on the sand? Now this is just a shadow. The hand is the real thing. And when you came to Jesus, when you believed in Jesus, that was the real baptism. You were joined to him, and what happened to him also happened to you. Jesus was alive, then he died and was buried, and then he rose from the dead. That is what happened to you when you believed in him.” He pointed to the shadow on the sand and said, “When you go down in the water and are raised up again, that is a picture of what has already happened.” Water baptism is a picture, a symbol to teach us what happened to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus.



OCTOBER 31 – Special Reformation Day service, beginning at 6:15 p.m. There will be food to eat and then we will watch, *God's Outlaw: The Story of William Tyndale and the English Bible*.

NOVEMBER 4 – Daylight Saving Time ends; be sure to adjust your clocks and be on time for the services. Also, the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper will be observed in the afternoon service.

DECEMBER 2 – Ben Holland, assistant pastor of Grace Community Church, will be preaching in the afternoon service.



### Puritan Gems

#### GOD'S WILL IS BEST

RICHARD BAXTER

Remember that every sinful desire is a rebelling of your wills against the will of God; and that it is his will that must govern and dispose of all, and your wills must be conformed to his; yea, that you must take pleasure and rest in the will of God. Reason the case with your hearts, and say, “Who is it that is the governor of the world? And who is to rule me and dispose of my affairs? Is it I or God? Whose will is it that must lead, and whose must follow? Whose will is better guided, God’s or mine? Either it is his will that I shall have what I desire, or if it be not, I need not be so eager, for I shall have it in his time and way; if it be not his will, is it fit for me to murmur and strive against him?” Remember that your discontents and carnal desires are so many accusations brought in against God; as if you said, “Thou hast not dealt well or wisely, or mercifully by me; I must have it better: I will not stand to thy will and government; I must have it as I will, and have the disposal of myself” (*Directions Against Sinful Desires and Discontent*).

## OCTOBER LADIES FELLOWSHIP MEETING



The ladies fellowship will meet on Friday, October 19 from 6:30 - 8:00 PM at the church.

The ladies are preparing Christmas care packages for two missionary families - the Hales and the Johnsons. If you would like to contribute items, please contact Jenny Lovassy ([bu2rfly@gmail.com](mailto:bu2rfly@gmail.com), 864.0241) or Jessica Mosely ([acharger@gmail.com](mailto:acharger@gmail.com), 682.3897).

# CLOWNS AND PROPHETS

## AL BAKER

Preaching is such a profound, mysterious exercise that it ought to evoke awe each time we hear it. Romans 10:13ff makes clear that a true preacher, when preaching from the Bible, no matter the level of his expertise or experience, though weak, sinful, and frail in himself, nonetheless speaks the Word of God. Paul says, "Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent?"

Paul is equating the Word of God with the words of a preacher. As the Word comes from the preacher's mouth, his words are a savor of life to some and a savor of death to others. Some embrace it to their soul's everlasting joy, and some reject it to their everlasting misery...

However, in light of what we commonly see in many churches today, I wonder if preachers really believe the essence of what they do. If preachers are a savor of life unto life and death unto death, if true preaching always yields one of these two responses, then how can we take our task so lightly? How can we spend so little time in sermon preparation, so little time in prayer, so little time asking the hard questions of our own lives which come from the text under our consideration? How can our church members take preaching so casually, give so little attention to it, pray so little for their pastors, so easily skip the preaching of God's Word? If this is such a vital task, then how can pastors spend so much of their time in relatively trivial issues? How can they approach their task with casualness, even frivolity?

Surely you know of preachers who are more like clowns than prophets. A clown's job is to entertain, to make the crowd feel good for a while, to help them forget their problems and needs.

A prophet, on the other hand, is to bring people face to face with God, to show them their spiritual bankruptcy, to make known their spiritual nakedness, to reveal to them that though they think they are rich and have need of nothing, they actually are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. He then is to exalt Jesus Christ as the only Savior of sinners, the One who died and was raised again for their justification. He is to call people to repentance and faith in Jesus. He is not to entertain, not to motivate or inspire to emotional, psychological, or professional well being. He is not merely to inform people of Biblical knowledge. He is to bring people face to face with the Holy One of Israel, the One who is a consuming fire, the One who will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, the One with whom we all have to do, the One with the two-edged sword who treads the winepress of the fierce wrath of God the Almighty.



Frivolity and triviality are exceedingly poor mediums for such a message. Life and death issues are not communicated well by clowns. The present worship service in some churches where the preacher enters the pulpit on a motorcycle, in a wheelbarrow, or descending from a high wire (I am not making this up) denies the sober message of the prophet. Reducing the sermon to ten, fifteen, or twenty minutes devoid of Biblical exposition, failing to use the S (sin) word or the H (hell) word, failing to speak clearly about the glory of Christ and His person and work, coming across as a motivational

speaker or clown, is to impugn the name of Christ and the office of preaching.

For example, let's say your spouse has been diagnosed with cancer and has six months to live. How would you feel if the doctor delivered the message to you in drama, in song and dance, or in a stand-up comedy routine? Surely you would be insulted? Would you not consider the doctor to be incredibly insensitive, making light of a serious and painful issue? The medium is essential to the message.

Doesn't the sober nature of the message of life and death, heaven and hell, demand a similar form of communication? Words are what the preacher has at his disposal, words made active by the Spirit who works in both the preacher and congregation. Words will do. We don't need drama. We don't need song and dance. We don't need comedy. We need straightforward words, cutting like a knife into the hearts of the hearers, opening them up to the folly of their own devices, drawing them back to Jesus who alone has the power to save and keep them until that great day.

Would you pray for your preacher, asking God to give him a Holy Spirit anointing in His preparation and delivery of sermons? Would you not begrudge him the time he needs in prayer and study, allowing God to deal with his own soul and heart? Would you release your pastor from attempting to be something he is not? He is not a clown. He is a prophet, called by God to preach the unfathomable riches of Christ for the salvation of souls and sanctification of His blood-bought people. Will you turn him loose, expecting God to speak powerfully and redemptively through him to all who hear his voice?

(Al Baker is pastor of Christ Community Presbyterian Church in West Hartford, Connecticut. This article has been edited to fit the space).