



M Grace Messenger

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

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

GBC HOMEPAGES

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

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

DEAN OLIVE, Pastor

— July 2009 Issue —

"Let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe" (Hebrews 10:28).



NURSERY SCHEDULE

July

- 05 Kristy Hines & Jenny Lovassy
- 12 Joshua & Lori Hewlett
- 19 Jon & Tanya Amis
- 26 David & Mary Alice Olive

August

- 02 Kevin & Sara Smith
- 09 Linda Olive & Sonja Williams
- 16 Vicki Johnson & Amber Solan
- 23 Bob & Faye Williams
- 30 Sharon Bagley & Hannah McFadden

FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF JULY 1, 2009

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$ 60,741.49
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 63,813.02
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 0.00
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$ 75,048.13
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 1,622.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$ 78,787.81
June Love offerings	\$ 0.00
June General Fund offerings	\$ 14,569.80
Building Fund balance	\$ 63,248.38
Missions Fund balance	\$ 7,758.17
General Fund balance	\$ 66,754.42



The motto on currency in America, *In God We Trust*, is an indication that the nation was founded on Christian principles. It is also obvious by examining buildings in Washington, official documents, and historical speeches by the Founding Fathers, that the United States is a country influenced by Christianity. *In God We Trust* is an excellent motto for the Bible says:

"It is better to trust the LORD than to put confidence in man" (Psalm 118:8).

"It is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works" (Psalm 73:28).

"The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever puts his trust in the LORD shall be safe" (Proverbs 29:25).

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

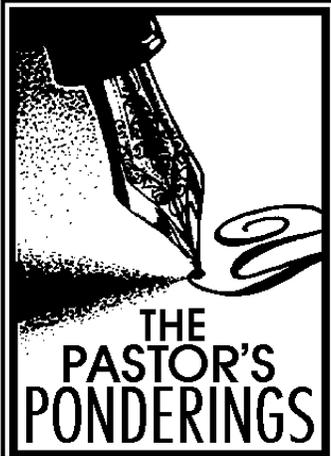
Morning Worship	9:30 AM
Sunday School	11:00 AM
Evening Worship	6:00 PM

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)	



I Love America

In 1976, I was the assistant pastor of Unity Baptist Church in Ashland, Kentucky. I was also the music director for the church. It being the Bi-Centennial of the United States, we combined the adult and youth choirs for a big patriotic musical. It was a John Peterson musical entitled, I Love America.

The title of that musical expresses the sentiment of most God-fearing Americans. I hope that you can say with exclamation, I love America! Believers in America ought to have a deep affection for their country. Here are two reasons why we ought to love America.

We should love America because it is the land of our birth. Had we been born in France, we probably would have felt the same way about France. That goes for Japan, Canada, or any other country. Most people have national pride. They love the land of their birth.

Having said this, however, Christians must be careful when it come to loving their country. We are dual citizens. We are also citizens of another country. "Our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. 3:20). Heaven is a country that calls us to a higher loyalty.

Because of our faith in Christ we must refrain from being caught up in nationalistic fervor. Nationalism is bad when it is proud and arrogant, when it harms and destroys. As Christians, we need to remember that our allegiance is to God supremely and to our country only secondary.

We love the land of our birth but that doesn't mean we agree with everything that our nation does. It doesn't mean we are for America, right or wrong. Carl Schurz, a 19th Century political reformer, put the idea of, "My country, right or wrong," into proper perspective when he said, "Our country, right or wrong: When right, to be kept right; when wrong, to be put right."

We should love America because of its religious freedom. Most of the early settlers of America came to these shores for religious liberty. They were not permitted to worship God in their homelands as they desired. So they came here in order to have the freedom to worship God according to the dictates of their own hearts.

It is not necessary to live in a country that has religious freedom in order

to be a Christian. There are believers everywhere in this world serving God and exalting the Lord Jesus Christ even though their countries oppose Christianity and are seeking to advance other religions. But it is a great blessing to live in a country that has religious freedom.

Let us remember today that religious freedom is a precious gift, one that few others have in this world. A man is free in America to have whatever religion he wants or to have none. Let's be thankful that everyone is free to worship as they please in this great land.

This doesn't mean that God accepts any belief and any type of worship. No, heresy is still criminal, but God is the one a man will have to deal with on that front. We are not his judge.

We have the privilege to persuade men of the truth as we see it, but not to force them. The gospel is to be advanced by proclamation, not by the sword. Paul told the Corinthians, "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men..." (2 Cor. 5:11).

Religious freedom means that cults and false religions must be tolerated. It is not the role of the government to bind the consciences of

men. Coercion of men to adopt a certain religion is abominable. Government has no right to force anyone to bow their knee in any form of worship.

CHS once said, in opposing the State Church of England, "The Church is Christ's Church and not the State's Church." We maintain that same sentiment. Our first amendment is of utmost importance. It says, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establish-

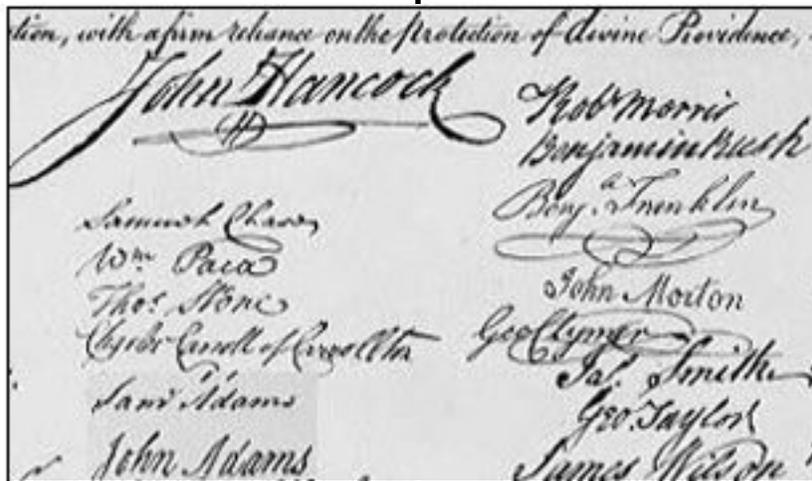
ment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

So let us enjoy our religious freedom. It is a blessing we too often take for granted.

It is a blessing to have the freedom to meet on the Lord's Day for worship. We have the freedom to assemble without fear of persecution. What a blessing it is not out of necessity to meet in secret or hide from the government. But not many Americans are taking advantage of this freedom. Church attendance continues to dwindle though we have the freedom and privilege to meet in worship

It is also a blessing to be able to freely share our faith. We would be arrested in some countries for speaking the name of Christ or for giving someone a gospel tract. But not here, at least, not yet. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes, so let us be busy in proclaiming the gospel to all men everywhere.

The month of July is a reminder to us to give thanks to God for the land of our birth and for the religious freedoms we enjoy.





We are hosting a regional FIRE Conference in September that will double as our Fall Bible Conference. The theme of the Conference is The Grace of God and the Gospel. Be sure to mark off the dates, **September 20-21**. David Ellis, pastor of Mount Road Baptist Church in Hinckley, England, will be preaching on the Lord's Day and on Monday and Tuesday evening. Joining him on Tuesday, with services beginning at 9 AM, will be John Crotts, Jerry Marcellino and Donnie Martin.

Only One Way



Troy Moseley will be teaching a four-part Sunday school series from the book, "Only One way?" This book, written by several great modern Christian thinkers, aides the Christian in confronting the rampant pluralism found in our Western culture. The book outlines the exclusive claims of Christ, as well as the singularity of Truth, Salvation and ultimately the one way to know them.



JULY 19 - Pastor Mark Winder, from Providence Presbyterian Church, will be preaching in the morning service, and Bob Marsh will be the preacher for the evening worship service.

AUGUST 16 - Our missionary to France, David Vaughn, will be home on a brief furlough and will be at GBC preaching God's word and bringing us up to date on his work.

AUGUST 24 - Classes begin for the Grace Baptist Theological Institute. The course that will be taught this Fall is the Doctrine of Christ, by Dr. Sam Waldron (DVD). Classes are on Monday evenings at 7 PM. There will be twelve classes consisting of two lectures each evening.

AUGUST 29 - The wedding of Laura McFadden will be at the West Huntsville Baptist Church at 2 PM.

SEPTEMBER 6 - The ordinance of the Lord's Supper will be observed in the afternoon service.

SEPTEMBER 20-22 - We are hosting a regional FIRE conference at our church. The main speaker is David Ellis, from Hinckley, England. Jerry Marcellino, Donny Martin, and John Crotts will be preaching also (dv).

WE BELIEVE

THE 1689 CONFESSION OF FAITH

CHAPTER 1 – THE HOLY SCRIPTURE (PARAGRAPH TWO)

The Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, consists of the following books which together make up the Old and New Testaments:



OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans. 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2 & 3 John, Jude, Revelation.

All these books are given by the inspiration of God to be the rule or standard of faith and life.

2 Timothy 3:16



Save the Date

A bridal shower will be given for Laura McFadden on Sunday, July 26, from 2 to 3:30 at the church. She is registered at Bed Bath and Beyond, Target, and Cutco.com.



Puritan Gems

National Sin

Thomas Brooks

A boat rows against the stream; the current punishes it. So is a nation violating a law of God; it is subject to a judgment. The boat turns and goes with the stream; the current assists it. So is a nation which has repented and put itself into harmony with God's Law; it is subject to a blessing. But the current is the same; it has not changed, only the boat has changed its relationship to the current. Neither does God change—we change; and the same law which executed itself in judgment now expresses itself in reward

THE DEVIL MADE ME DO IT

PHIL JOHNSON

During one of my trips to India a few years ago I met a college student who approached me after a meeting where I taught. He said he believed he was suffering an intense Satanic attack, and he wondered if I knew of any special methods of spiritual warfare that could help rid his home and family of Satanic influences. So I asked about the nature of the “attack.”

He said he was finding it impossible to get along with his mother. He said the two of them hardly ever spoke a civil word to one another, and it was destroying the peace of their household. He said he found it hard to study the Bible or grow spiritually as long as these tensions ruled the household. And he had come to the meeting that night, specifically hoping I would tell him how to get Satan out of his household.

I first asked him what made him think this problem was uniquely Satanic. As he described it to me, it sounded much more like raw carnal pride on both his part and his mother’s. They were constantly saying unkind and unloving things to one another. He admitted that he purposely did things he knew would annoy her. He spoke disrespectfully to her. He said he just couldn’t stand her and didn’t like being around her.

It sounded like youthful rebellion on his part, more than a satanic attack. So I said, “It sounds to me like you’re just behaving in a fleshly way. I think you need to look into your own heart for the culprit, rather than blaming the devil and outside influences.”

But he insisted that I just didn’t understand the issue. It must be Satanic, he said, because the nature of his conflict with his mother was so powerful—and living with her was like living with the devil.

When I raised my eyebrow at that,

he quickly added that he couldn’t help himself; the temptation to speak hatefully to her was so overpowering, it was as if evil forces took over his mind.

I told him first of all, that regardless of Satan’s involvement in his struggle, the root sin causing his problems was fleshly, carnal pride. I also reminded him that when he sinned with his tongue, he was sinning deliberately of his own accord, so he couldn’t escape his own responsibility by blaming Satan for the turmoil in his household.

But I told him I agreed that his trouble was probably also demonic. After all, James 3:6 says, “the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell” I also reminded him that according to 1 Samuel 15:23, “Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft.” By indulging in that kind of rebellion, he was committing a sin as evil and as satanic as witchcraft. He was opening his own heart and life to Satan’s influence, and he was giving Satan every opportunity to take advantage of him. “You need to own those sins and repent of them,” I said.

Then I told him, “I’m going to let you in on a secret. I’m going to give you a fool-proof technique for spiritual warfare that is the most powerful and potent defense against Satan you could ever employ. If you do what I say, and follow these instructions every time you are tempted to speak an unkind word to your mother, I guarantee this will solve your problem.”

So he took out his pen and a piece of paper and prepared to take notes. And when he was looking at me expectantly, ready for the answer, I quoted James 4:7: “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” And Ephesians 4:26-27: “Let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil.”

Furthermore, I said, “If Satan doesn’t flee—if

he is successful in luring you into sin—it is always because your own wicked heart agrees with him and cooperates with him, and so you do whatever sinful thing he has tempted you to do. When that happens, instead of blaming it on influences beyond your control, you need to repent, and admit your own fleshly complicity with the devil, and resist him rather than cooperating with him. ‘Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour . . . resist [him, and remain] stedfast in the faith’ (1 Peter 5:8-9).”

I could tell he wasn’t pleased with my reply. He desperately wanted me to agree that his problems were completely caused by the devil, and that therefore this was completely outside his own heart and beyond his own control. If I had offered to come to his house and conduct some kind of ceremonial exorcism, I’m sure he would have taken me up on it immediately. But he was not prepared to admit that he was in any way culpable for the disharmony in his own home.

We’d all like to believe that our struggle with sin involves only external enemies. We’re willing to say that Satan is to blame for our sin. We’re even willing to blame the world—as long as it’s an external cause. As long as we don’t have to take the blame on ourselves.

But even our struggle with the world is a struggle that is fomented by inordinate desires that emanate from within ourselves, because “All that is in the world [is] the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John 2:15). Those are sinful tendencies that come from within us. We ourselves are to blame when inordinate worldly affections crowd out what should be a pure love for God and the things of God. Neither the world nor the devil could ever take advantage of us if our own flesh did not cooperate.