



M^G 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

— June 2012 Issue —

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace" 1 Peter 4:10



NURSERY SCHEDULE

June

03 Pat and Kristy Hines
10 Kevin and Sara Smith
17 Kristin Scarbrough and Lori Hewlett
24 Vickie Johnson and Melanie Myatt

July

01 Linda Olive and Sonja Williams
08 Peter and Jenny Lovassy
15 Jon and Tanya Amis
22 Troy and Jessica Moseley
29 Amber Solan and Hannah McFadden

CHURCH CLEANING

June - Lovassys
July - Hammecks
August - Moseleys
September - Amises

FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF JUNE 1, 2012

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$ 67,323.10
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 60,997.28
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 309.20
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$ 73,160.69
Designated Missions (ytd)	\$ 8,460.00
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 110.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$ 81,730.69
May Love offerings	\$ 0.00
May General Fund offerings	\$ 14,339.30
May Designated Missions	\$ 2,600.00
Building Fund balance	\$103,574.08
Missions Fund balance	\$ 17,228.13
General Fund balance	\$104,140.93

FATHERING

Mr. Consistency

KEY BIBLE VERSE: *"Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it" (Proverbs 22:6).*

When a child of a consistent father interacts with his dad, the child knows what to expect. There are few surprises and no scares.

A consistent father governs his moods. He is not affectionate one minute and angry the next, with no reason for the sudden mood swing. Inconsistent fathers are emotionally erratic. Years later, their children will stand up and confess, often through tears, "Whenever I approached my dad, I had no idea whether he was going to hug me or belt me."

A consistent father also governs his behavior. His children can count on his always being their father, always coming back home. Children of an inconsistent dad live with the threatening sense that their father's bags are packed and waiting by the door.

He also governs his behavior by practicing what he preaches. When he makes a promise, his children can count on his keeping it.

He also practices what he preaches by being consistent in his moral behavior. He avoids hypocrisy at all costs.

Ken Canfield, executive director, National Center for Fathering

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

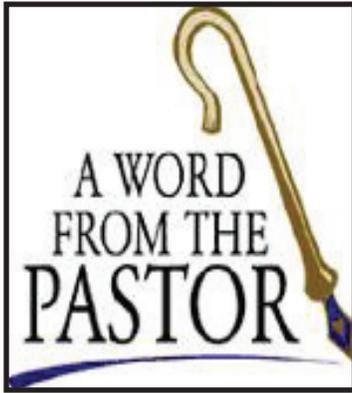
Morning Worship 9:30 AM
Sunday School 11:00 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

WEDNESDAY EVENING

Bible Study and Prayer Meeting
7:00 PM

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)



The Character of God

When Moses went up on Mt. Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments for the second time, the LORD came down in a cloud and met him there. When the LORD met with Moses, he revealed himself more fully to his servant than he had before. “The LORD passed before him and

proclaimed, ‘The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation’” (Ex. 34:6-7)

The One who bears the name LORD (Yahweh, Jehovah) described himself to Moses. Note the double declaration of God’s covenant name – “The LORD, the LORD” – the name God made himself known to Moses at the burning bush. What follows now on Mt. Sinai is an awe-inspiring self-description that the LORD gives of himself. It is a detailed revelation of the character of God.

The description that God gives of himself to Moses is quoted in many other places in the OT. Some or all of the attributes listed in Ex 34:6-7 are essentially repeated in a number of passages. There are partial quotations of this passage in 2 Chron. 30:9; Ps. 111:4; 112:4; 116:5; Nahum 1:3. There are fuller quotations in Neh. 9:17; Ps. 86:15; 103:8; 145:8; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2.

The importance of this revelation of God’s character to Moses is indicated by its being quoted so frequently! Someone has well said, “Moses’ glimpse of God becomes an answer to the question of the ages: Who is God, and what is God like? This is a Mount Everest affirmation of who God is.” Luther called this text a “sermon on the name of the Lord.”

What is God like? When Yahweh passed before Moses, how did he make himself known? He described himself in a fascinating array of attributes.

First, he is merciful. There are different words in the OT that convey the idea of mercy. This particular word comes from the Hebrew word for womb. It denotes “motherly feeling.” The NASV and NIV translate it “compassionate.” Mercy is compassion for the miserable. This word expresses the affective/emotional aspect of love. God is merciful.

Second, he is gracious. God’s mercy and compassion displayed toward the needy is grounded in his grace. God does not see any merit in man because of sin but God is nonetheless gracious. A. W. Pink said, “All of God’s mercies are gifts, free favors to a people entirely devoid of any worthiness.”

Third, he is slow to anger. This word denotes the long and patient endurance of God. The Hebrew expression literally means “long of nose” or “long of breathing.” The word was used in connection with anger since anger is accompanied by rapid, violent breathing through the nostrils. “When someone is angry his nostrils are said to flare (like a raging bull). God’s nostrils take a long time to ignite” (Currid).

Because God is holy he must punish sin. But God is also patient. His loving nature delays punishment in order to give sinners time to repent and turn away from sin (cf. 2 Peter 3:9). God will bring his judgment against sinners but “God’s time schedule is modified by patience” (Hannah).

Fourth, he is abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. Two attributes are connected together in this statement and are joined together with the word “abounding.” Steadfast love denotes God’s lovingkindness to his covenant people Israel. It also denotes God’s mercy condescending to his creatures as sinners, in unmerited kindness. This word is frequently translated “mercy” in the KJV and is connected with forgiveness. Faithfulness signifies steadfastness. Pink says, “God is faithful to His covenant-engagements, true to both His promisings and His threatenings .”

Fifth, God describes himself as “keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin” (7). God’s steadfast love extends to many! He is full of forgiveness. Through Christ, even now, God’s wrath is turned away from and his mercy is extended to sinners.

Lastly, God describes himself by saying, “But who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation” (7). If the guilty do not seek refuge in Christ, their sins will not be pardoned. He will not clear the guilty.

He even visits the iniquity of the fathers down through the third and fourth generation. This doesn’t mean that God punishes the “innocent” because of another’s crime. We are responsible to God for our own actions but at the same time, we also inherit countless disadvantages because of the sin of our parents. We are born in sin but we also willingly commit the sins of our fathers. There are many children today who are suffering the consequences of their parent’s sin!

This is how God reveals himself – he is merciful, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands... who will by no means clear the guilty... This revelation of God is the exegesis of his name! This is what God is like. And God has not changed! He is still the same.

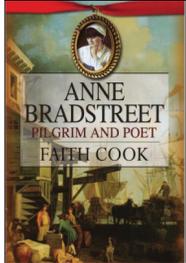
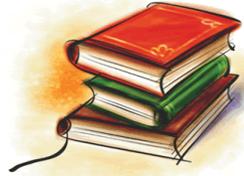
Let us be encouraged by God’s revelation of himself. Let us remember his character when we pray. And let us exclaim these attributes in our praise and worship.

BOOK REVIEW

Anne Bradstreet

by Faith Cook

Evangelical Press, 176 pp.



Anne Bradstreet grew up in a Christian home, and was educated in a time when girls rarely had this opportunity. Encouraged to read, she had access to a good library. She met her future husband, Simon Bradstreet, at the age of ten; he was eighteen. She suffered from smallpox which she feared would scar her, and married at just sixteen years old. It was a loving marriage. Life looked set to be

very comfortable. But times became more difficult under Charles I and in 1630, aged eighteen, she sailed with a group of Puritans, including her own parents and siblings, to the New World.

On arrival in this harsh new environment her heart sank but she was determined to live to God's glory. Her husband, a good businessman, was often away on business for the colony and she was lonely. Often in ill health, bearing eight children and with many dangers and moves she found time to write poetry and became America's first published poet in a time when women were not recognized or encouraged in academic pursuits. She had a close walk with her God.

The author has packed her book with information on the events of history that drove brave Christians to undertake a new life in a far off land. Full of lifestyle interest, Ann Bradstreet gives a godly role model to our generation. Once started it is hard to put this book down. Highly recommended.

Reviewed by Brenda Holmes, from Grace Magazine



JULY 1 – The date has changed from August 5 to July 1 for Don Currin's visit with us. He will be preaching in the morning worship hour and will preach at the communion service in the afternoon. He will also take the SS hour to tell us about the work of HeartCry Mission Society in Europe, of which he is the director.

JULY 3 – Prayer Meeting will be on Tuesday, July 3, instead of the 4th of July.

JULY 28 – Wedding of Justin Thrasher and Hannah McFadden at 1st Baptist Church, Scottsboro, AL, 215 S. Andrews St., at 4 PM. Dinner reception is to follow at Goosepond Civic Center.

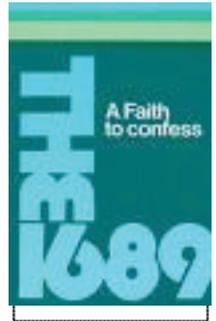
OCTOBER 19-21 – The date has also changed from Sept. 30-Oct. 2 to Oct. 19-21 for the Fall Bible Conference with David Ellis, pastor of Mount Road Baptist Church, Hinckley, England. David will also be preaching at the Southeast Regional FIRE Conference at Faith Bible Church, Sharpsburg, GA, Oct. 15-16 (dv).

We Believe

The 1689 Confession of Faith

CHAPTER 17

PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS



1. The saints are those whom God has accepted in Christ the Beloved, and effectually called and sanctified by His Spirit. To them He has given the precious faith that pertains to all His elect. The persons to whom such blessings have been imparted can neither totally nor finally fall from the state of grace, but they shall certainly persevere in grace to the end and be eternally saved, for God will never repent of having called them and made gifts to them. Consequently He continues to beget and to nourish in them faith, repentance, love, joy, hope, and all the graces of the Spirit that issue in immortality. Many storms and floods may arise and beat upon them, yet they can never be moved from the foundation and rock on which by faith they are firmly established. Even if unbelief and Satan's temptations cause them for a time to lose the sight and comfort of the light and love of God, yet the unchanging God remains their God, and He will certainly keep and save them by His power until they come to the enjoyment of their purchased possession; for they are engraven on the palms of His hands, and their names have been written in the book of life from all eternity.

Ps. 89:31, 32; Mal. 3:6; John 10:28, 29; 1 Cor. 11:32; Phil. 1:6; 2 Tim. 2:19; 1 John 2:19

2. It is on no free will of their own that the saints' perseverance depends, but on the immutability of the decree of election, which in its turn depends upon the free and unchangeable love of God the Father, the efficacious merit and intercession of Jesus Christ and the saints' union with Him, the oath of God, the abiding character of the Spirit's indwelling of the saints, the divine nature of which they are partakers and, lastly, the terms of the covenant of grace. All these factors guarantee the certainty and infallibility of the saints' perseverance.

Jer. 32:40; John 14:19; Rom. 5:9, 10; 8:30; 9:11, 16; Heb. 6:17, 18; 1 John 3:9

3. In various ways—the temptations of Satan and of the world, the striving of indwelling sin to get the upper hand, the neglect of the means appointed for their preservation—saints may fall into fearful sins, and may even continue in them for a time. In this way they incur God's displeasure, grieve His Holy Spirit, do injury to their graces, diminish their comforts, experience hardness of heart and accusations of conscience, hurt and scandalize others, and bring God's chastisements on themselves. Yet being saints their repentance will be renewed, and through faith they will be preserved in Christ Jesus to the end.

2 Sam. 12:14; Ps. 32:3, 4; 51:10, 12; Isa. 64:5, 9; Matt. 26:70, 72, 74; Luke 22:32, 61, 62; Eph. 4:30



John Owen

“It is not the distance of the earth from the sun, nor the sun's withdrawing itself, that makes a dark and gloomy day; but the interposition of clouds and vaporous exhalations. Neither is thy soul beyond the reach of the promise, nor does God withdraw Himself; but the vapors of thy carnal, unbelieving heart do cloud thee.”

The Deep Limitations of Digital Church

Al Mohler

Do you go to the Internet for church? Cathy Lynn Grossman of USA Today reports on the increasing use of digital technology by churches. This trend is not new, of course, but some of the developments she traces are fresh and innovative.

She begins with a look at Christ Fellowship in McKinney, Texas — a church Grossman describes as “on board with almost every high-tech gambit under heaven.” She then writes:

“Find the church by going online — the 21st-century version of sighting a steeple on the horizon. Beyond their website, Christ Fellowship has a Facebook page to give it a friendly presence in social media.

You can download the worship program by scanning their customized-with-a-cross QR code. The worship services are streamed online from their Internet campus — with live chat running so you can share spiritual insights in real time.

Afterward, says senior Pastor Bruce Miller, ‘someone will ask you, ‘How did it go? Did God help you, today? How can we help you?’ Just like we do when people come to our building in McKinney. We are here to help people find and follow Christ, wherever they are starting out from.’

And wherever they are in the digital world.”

There is something good, healthy, and Great Commission-minded about the eager use of new communication technologies. Digital technologies and social media have transformed our world, redefining how human beings engage one another and how we all access information. A church without a digital presence is a church that, to many people, simply doesn't exist.

I am very thankful for the ability

to access massive sermon libraries in audio or video form from preachers of the past and from pulpit titans of the present as well. Go online and you can read the sermons of Charles Spurgeon, Martin Luther, and a host of others. Preachers in churches of any size can establish a global reach for their ministry. Digital technologies allow the collapse of distance and time and these platforms also allow the Gospel to jump geographical and political barriers.

For all this we should be thankful. I eagerly use online Bible programs and do research through digital media. I am thankful for the platforms for ministry and communication represented by



social media. I am grateful for these new tools and technologies and I make use of them to reach people around the world.

At the same time, there are dangers. John Mark Reynolds of Biola University is cited within the article, and he addressed the danger inherent in these technologies: “How can the Christian Church utilize the tools media has given us without being subsumed by them? You don't want delivery to become everything.”

That is a crucial issue. But the challenge should not be addressed only to churches. Research indicates that a significant number of Christians are tempted to allow these technologies to serve as a substitute for participation in a local church. This is deadly and dangerous for believers.

Christ clearly intends for his people to be gathered together into congregations. The fellowship of the saints is a vital means of grace for the disciple of Christ. We can be enriched by means of listening to sermons online and by delving deeply into the ocean of knowledge found within Christian websites, but these cannot replace the authenticity that comes only by means of the local church and its ministry.

Believers need the accountability found only within the local church. We need to hear sermons preached by flesh-and-blood preachers in the real-time experience of Christian worship. We need to confess the faith together through the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. We need to confess our sins and declare forgiveness by the blood of Christ together. We need to be deployed for service in Christ's name together.

Without apology, we can learn much from preaching heard or seen over the Internet. Churches should engage digital technologies with the same eagerness that we use jet aircraft, copy machines, the printing press, and the telephone. At the same time, none of these can replace the fellowship of the saints and the centrality of the local church.

A digital preacher will not preach your funeral. The deep limitations of digital technologies become evident where the church is most needed. Don't allow the Internet to become your congregation. YouTube is a horrible place to go to church.

It may be true that most people in this culture are, as Cathy Lynn Grossman observes, “in the digital world.” Just don't forget that we are all in the real flesh-and-blood world, too — and that is where we go to church.