



Grace 2 U Newsletter

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2** Pastor David's Article/
Administrative Team
- 3** Discipleship Team /
Evangelism Team
- 4** Fellowship Team
- 5** Social Justice Team /
Grace Notes
- 6** Women's Ministry /
Mark Your Calendars
- 7** Prayer List / Usher &
Liturgist Schedule
- 8** Birthdays /
Anniversaries



I assume you are aware by now of the two American astronauts who traveled to the International Space Station in June for a planned 8-day mission, but ended up with an extended stay in orbit when their spacecraft malfunctioned. Butch Wilmore and Sunita Williams are currently anticipating a return to earth in February of next year, making their trip closer to eight months than eight days. The pair have been remarkably calm and good-natured about the unexpected challenge, which I find really impressive. I can't imagine how I'd respond in the same situation, mostly because I'm not an astronaut and don't know how to do spaceman things. But there is also the difficulty of responding positively to going on a work trip and being required to stay 2,962% longer than anticipated. How do you pack for a trip like that? Is it possible to make 8 days of socks and underwear last for more than 245 days? Maybe if we were talking about a week-long business trip to southern Italy that ended up lasting more than half a year, then that might be something to which I could find a way to adjust amicably. Of course there would still be some serious inconveniences. I can just imagine how much I would miss my wife, family and friends, my church, my bed, my comfortable routines, my familiar environment, and Ranger! How do you accidentally leave a dog for eight months?

That's why I'm so amazed at the positivity expressed by the two people at the center of this problem. It's true what has often been said about one's attitude: you cannot control any of the circumstances of life. All you can control is your response to what happens to you.

As much as I would like to believe I would respond with equanimity to whatever crisis I am called to face, I am not sure I would automatically rise to the challenge with as much grace as Suni Williams and Butch Wilmore. Hopefully, through the practice of daily Christian disciplines like prayer, study, worship, and similar practices, I can continue to cultivate a spirit of trust in God and a reliance on the Holy Spirit's presence in my life to guide, nurture, and protect me in whatever surprising and difficult circumstance I experience.

As adherents of the Christian faith in America, we are well aware of the multiple challenges with which our religious practice is confronted. The church as we know it doesn't look the same as the one in which we grew up decades ago. The esteem with which people regard Christians is not as high as it used to be. The idea of a Christian influence on cultural issues doesn't seem to hold the same appeal as it once did. We may have thought once that we knew exactly how this Christian journey of ours would go. We probably took for granted things to come: happiness, growth, resources, influence, comfort, etc. However, some cultural and societal "malfunctions" have created unanticipated challenges to which we are now required to adjust.

As we experience the world, the church, and our lives changing around us in ways we may not have expected, my prayer for us at Grace Presbyterian is that we respond with grace and positivity. Rather than complain that these changes are not what we signed up for, and bemoan the unfairness of a situation we didn't choose, let us channel our inner astronaut and greet this unexpected opportunity with enthusiasm and an attitude of hopefulness. Like Butch and Suni, we are actively waiting for our "ride home" to pick us up at the appropriate time. Let's make the most of the wait. What a time to be alive!

What a time to see what God is doing in a world unlike any we have known!

What a blessing we have been given to be able to model and share the love of Christ with a world that needs it so desperately.

Grace to you.

David



ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

The administrative team, with the great assistance of our church Treasurer Bill Keller, devised a plan in March to start a campaign to pay off the church mortgage. Due to our wonderful and generous members, that was accomplished in May. We now have no mortgage payment to make each month. Thanks to all.

The admin team is starting the process of replacing most of the doors in the church. These new doors will be steel and have crash bars which offer added safety in an emergency.

Peace,
Joe Fortune
Administrative Elder

Grace Presbyterian Church		
Financial Position		
As of May 2024		
	Month to Date	Year to Date
Operating Revenues(1)(2)		
Pledged/Unpledged	36,548	128,960
Other	420	8,701
Total	36,967	137,661
Expenses (1)	22,147	108,555
Net	14,821	29,105
Cash/Savings		
General		83,298
Designated/Restricted		49,855
Total		136,559
Mortgage Balance		0.00

(1) Does not include amounts for mortgage reduction
 (2) Includes pre-paid pledges

a gift. Our response to this grace is gratitude, shown through living, loving, and working for others and important causes.

One way you can express your gratitude is by generously giving to your church. Your contributions help us share our wealth with those in need, maintain and improve our facilities, support our excellent staff, and rebuild our financial cushion post-COVID. We had a good year in 2024 and accomplished an important financial objective by paying off our mortgage! Thanks to all who helped achieve that goal. In late October, you will receive a stewardship packet in the mail containing, among other things, a draft budget and a pledge card. We hope you'll consider making or increasing your pledge to help us achieve a balanced budget for the first time in several years and meet our mission, outreach and discipleship goals.

Peace,




DISCIPLESHIP TEAM

Grace and Gratitude

Fall is here, bringing excitement with fresh school beginnings, football rivalries, cooler weather, and beautiful scenery. I am excited as we enter the final phases of planning Grace's budget and kick off our 2025 Stewardship campaign with the theme "Grace and Gratitude."

Why "Grace and Gratitude"? These words capture the essence of our faith. Grace is the incredible news that God loves us unconditionally through Jesus Christ. It reminds us that everything—life, love, work, and joy—is



EVANGELISM / MISSION TEAM

Come and See!

Ever since Karen and I first started attending Grace Presbyterian about seven years ago (has it really been that long?), we have wondered if there are more people, perhaps many more in our area, who would enjoy getting to know us and what we have here. Many of the people I run into do not know we're here.

We fulfill a much-needed “niche” among the churches of Dawson County. Let’s be honest, with all the churches we have in this area, there are not many with inspiring traditional worship, a great choir, profound liturgy, and thought-provoking exegetical sermons – not to mention the wonderful warmth of the people of our congregation. Just look at what we have! And for such a small congregation, look at the impact we have in our community through Good Shepherd Clinic, Pastor Jordan’s work with Dawsonville youth, and so many other important ministries and outreaches. My dream is that more people in our community, perhaps many more, would discover us.

About a year ago Pastor Jordan preached a sermon with the theme of “Come and See” about a campus ministry he once led with some other students. He mentioned that he was surprised at how many people showed up with that simple invitation, Come and See!

I’m sure you realize that our area is growing rapidly; there are many new families and individuals moving in. Let’s begin to make a concerted effort to let them know we are here, who we are, and what we do.

In that vein, we are designating particular Sundays or other special services to invite friends and acquaintances. One such highlight that everyone seems to enjoy is our annual Kirking of the Tartans and Thanksgiving Dinner (the Sunday before Thanksgiving). We will put a banner out front inviting the community. Tell everyone we’ll have bagpipes, an inspiring message from our Pastor, and a dinner following. Let’s let the people of Dawson County know we’re here and all are welcome!

Blessings,
Andrew Permenter



FELLOWSHIP TEAM

October six. Save The Date! It's the picnic right after church at Veterans Park, large pavilion. Fried chicken (of course, it's a picnic) furnished by Grace with sides and desserts provided by the congregation. There is a sign-up sheet in the hallway.

It has been brought to my attention that there is dissension among the troops. It seems some of the ladies feel providing refreshments after church has become a competition. It is not. There are no requirements or even guidelines. Some of the ladies providing refreshments see it as a time to try new recipes or drag out old favorites, others see it as a chore, others feel it's a gift of love. However you feel about providing refreshments, it is NOT a competition.

If you feel led to sign up, then feel just as led to bring as little or as much as you wish.

We should not sign up at all but ask Crystal to send out a request each week for help with refreshment... But no one is obligated to do anything.

Grace and Blessings.
Betty Powell



SOCIAL JUSTICE TEAM

Greetings To My Friends....Promise 686 (www.promise686.org) has invited us to participate in an initiative to mobilize church communities to care for vulnerable children by equipping them with tools to support foster families, adoptive families and an at risk home situation. I know we are a church committed to the community but often we don't know where and how to address those needs, Promise 686 gives us those tools. All you have to do is scan the QR code to sign up (use your camera feature on your phone and it will direct you or check with me at church for assistance).

After signing up a few months ago I have had the opportunity to see what those needs are and often they are basic like a dresser, a bed, a few dollars to meet an electric bill. All for people in our community within a 30-mile radius of Grace. I encourage you to prayerfully consider signing up for the emails. It is not more than 1 or 2 a week and they are almost always met by people like you who have the resources to change a family's path by chipping in whenever you can. If it is not something you can help with, wait for the next one and see if that is a better fit for your situation.

As always, thank you for your leadership in giving back to our neighbors. It is such a basic and yet often overlooked tenant of our journey in Faith.

Grace2U,
Kristie

CarePortal

A CRITICAL RESOURCE FOR FAMILY ADVOCACY MINISTRY

CarePortal connects your church FAM to local children and families in crisis. What if we knew the needs of at-risk children? What if the State took these needs to a community of caring churches?

ARE YOU WILLING TO RECEIVE AN EMAIL?



- 1 CHILD WELFARE IDENTIFIES A NEED**
When a Child Welfare worker identifies a vetted need – perhaps a crib, bunk beds, mentoring, or transportation – they access CarePortal online, input the need, and submit the request for help.
- 2 THE CHURCH IS INFORMED**
Using GEO Radius Technology, CarePortal quickly sends an email invitation to surrounding churches who have signed up to help both the hurting children and families who live in their community as well as the foster families who are supporting them.
- 3 THE CHURCH ANSWERS THE CALL**
The Church's point of contact disseminates the need to participating congregants to see if someone can meet the need. A caring participant "claims" the need and the Church's contact then responds affirmatively to the original email. The need is met, a family is strengthened, and churches are then in touch with those who may need support within their own zip code.

NEXT STEPS

- JOIN THE MOVEMENT:** Churches in your county are coming together to care for the vulnerable children in your area.
- IDENTIFY LAY LEADERS:** Identify those who will champion the needs of vulnerable children and families.
- ENROLL:** Follow QR to enroll. Help build a strong network of support in your county.
- SHARE THE VISION:** Invite your church to respond to the number and needs of vulnerable children in your county.

Contact:
Kristie Homans
kristiehomans@gmail.com
706-429-6800



Enroll here for CarePortal!



GRACE NOTES

Hello Grace Family. It's wonderful to have the choir back in the loft on Sunday mornings and we hope you have enjoyed us being there. We've also welcomed new interns to the ensemble this year, Ayden Burchfield & Reece Neidlinger! It's a blessing to have them join our ensemble. Sydney Godbey is returning as an intern this year and Emma Teems (who joined us last spring) will be continuing as well.

We must also say goodbye to one of our long-term members and my Assistant Director, Katie Dial. Her last Sunday was September 22nd, and she will be greatly missed. We wish her well in all her future endeavors.

We are always looking for new members to join the group (especially guys). If you are interested in singing with us, please join us for a rehearsal on Wednesday nights at 7pm and/or see Gene on Sunday to ask any questions you might have. We'd love to see you in the loft. Enjoy the cooler weather (hopefully it sticks around) and see you on Sunday 😊.

Grace2U, Gene



The Ladies of Grace enjoyed a lovely September luncheon at Olive Garden hosted by Bettie Fore, Karen Davenport, and Joan Palazzolo. It was made even more special because it gave us the

opportunity to celebrate Betty Powell's birthday. Our next luncheon will be Tuesday, October 22nd at 12:30 in the church fellowship hall. It will be a potluck luncheon hosted by Shirley Schmelzinger, Joann Keller, and Peggy Thornton. There will be no November luncheon. We are blessed once again to be invited to Kristie Meyers' home for our December luncheon. It will be Tuesday, December 10th.

Our Ladies of Grace Bible study continues each Tuesday at 10:00 in the church fellowship hall. We invite all of you to join us for our luncheons and Bible studies.

Blessings,

Peggy Thornton



October 6: *Peacemaking Offering and Church Picnic @ Veteran's Memorial Park*

October 20: *Generosity Sunday*

November 3: *All Saints Day, Daylight Saving Time Ends*

November 17: *Consecration Sunday*

November 24: *Kirkin O' the Tartan, Church Anniversary, and Thanksgiving Feast*

December 1: *Hanging of the Green Service*

December 24: *Candlelight Christmas Eve Service*



In Our Prayers: John and Susan Adams (Marsha Loftin), Connie Alford (Shirley), Susan Atkins, Frank Ball, Ruth Ann Ball, Baron Barnes (Mary Ann Sheehy), Bo Barnes (Mary Ann Sheehy), Bill and Sandy (Dan Scott), Thos Blackstock (Mary Ann Sheehy' Nephew), Gretchen Blackwell, Tyler Chadwick, Keith Chastain, Lisa Conn, Patricia Crain (Ruth Ann Ball), Nick Curry (Marsha Loftin), Darren (Chris Yarbrough), Mary Delasota (Bob Thornton), Mike Eason (Joey), Grace (Chuck), Jim Hambright, Kevin Herrit and Family, Clara, Hogan (Shirley), Margaret Hunt (Jim Hambright), Irena (Gretchen Blackwell), Doug Jones (Margie O'Byrne), Julia (Kristi Deutz), Cynthia Kodua, Shelby Lee, Linda (Jaycey), Stan Lowrey (Shirley), Martha's Family (Dan Scott), Penny McDaniel (Kay), Eric Nelson (Katie), Kay Parrish, Mandy Power, Brenda Reagans (Kristie), Kathy Silvio (Marsha Loftin), Nancy Smiley (Ruth Ann Ball), Susan (Ruth Ann Ball), Viviana Torres, the family of John Trammel (Emma Teems), Carol Watkins, Bill and Sherry Weeks, Wilma & her husband (Sandy)

Assisted Living: Sandy Grimes, Zoe Putnam

Sympathy: The family of Frank Duke

USHER /LITURGIST SCHEDULE

Liturgists:

October

10/6 Kristie Homans
10/13 Grace Walden
10/20 Christy Jordan
10/27 Katie Schumacher

Liturgists:

November

11/3 Joyce Ball
11/10 Chris Seese
11/17 Susan Atkins
11/24 Logan Collins

Liturgists:

December

12/1 Joey Homans
12/8 Grace Walden
12/15 Peggy Thornton
12/22 Christy Jordan
12/24 Christmas Eve
12/29 Gene Seese

Ushers:

October

Jim Hambright, Margie O'Byrne, Priscilla Taylor Joann & Bill Keller, Jane Miller
Susan Atkins, Joey & Kristie Homans
Michael & Joyce Ball, Nancy McCue

Ushers:

November

Elaine Coker, Joann Keller, Barbara Quintrell Dan & Jane Miller, Betty Powell
Gordon & Jeannette Brand, Barbara Quintrell Kristie Homans, Bob & Peggy Thornton

Ushers:

December

Dan & Jane Miller, Priscilla Taylor Michael & Joyce Ball, Betty Powell
Ron & Elaine Coker, Barbara Quintrell Jerry & Susan Atkins, Nancy McCue
Marsha Loftin, Bob & Peggy Thornton Bill & Joann Keller, Margie O'Byrne



October Birthdays

- 4th - Jerry Atkins
- 7th - Peggy Thornton
- 10th - Zoe Putnam
- 17th - Shirley Hawkins
- 18th - Chuck Achuff
- 23rd - Ruth Ann Ball
- 27th - Kevin Herrit

November Birthdays

- 3rd - Jane Joh
- 4th - Kristie Homans
- 4th - Cynthia Kodua
- 10th - Bonnie Fry
- 14th - Sawyer McDuffie
- 15th - Anna Grace Martin
- 17th - Paula Harris
- 19th - Bob Thornton
- 21st - River Parrish
- 21st - Shirley Schmelzinger
- 23rd - Paula Halteman

December Birthdays

- 1st - Elaine Coker
- 8th - Susan Atkins
- 10th - Shelby Lee
- 14th - Lynette Steritz
- 17th - Roy Blackwell
- 19th - Margaret Honn
- 22nd - Gordon Brand
- 27th - Sarah Logan
- 30th - Carol Watkins



November

27th - Susan & Jerry Atkins

December

16th - Joyce & Michael Ball

25th - Karen & Andrew Permenter