



8989 Woodlands Pkwy, The Woodlands TX. 77382 / Phone: 281-296-0911 / www.gracewoodlands.org

*To all who are spiritually weary and seek rest;
to all who mourn and long for comfort;
to all who struggle and desire victory;
to all who sin and need a Savior;
to all who are strangers and want fellowship;
to all who hunger and thirst after righteousness;
and to all who will come,
this church opens wide her doors
and offers welcome
in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Church Staff & Officers

David J. Wilcher

Lead Pastor

Kyle Bobos

Pastor of Children's Ministries

Todd Crusey

Pastor of Community Life

Grayson Baird

Director of Student Ministries

Elders

Dan Brink

Jon Green

Mike Hume

Mark Moore

Andy Yung

Deacons

Matt Bradshaw

Mike Bellin

Amy Bottorff

Justin Chandler

Jeff Cranford

Mark Hill

Scott Johnston

Steve Kovach

Rob McIntosh

Mike Ryan

Sunny Yung

Grace Church is affiliated with the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA).

Reflections

Christmas reminder: Don't forget, it's about the birthday of Jesus, the Savior who threatens to disturb the lives of those he has chosen. Not only your life but the lives of those in your circle who may be called of him. Prepare to recognize the disturbance, and respond with gentle kindness, understanding and love.

-Anonymous

The Christmas story reminds us that hopelessness is the only doorway to true and eternal hope. It's only when you give up on you that you seek and celebrate what God, in holy love, offers you in the person and work of his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. It's true that hope isn't a thing; it's a person, and his name is Immanuel. Celebrate hope this Christmas.

-Paul Tripp
Come, Let Us Adore Him

God became man; the divine Son became a Jew; the Almighty appeared on earth as a helpless human baby, unable to do more than lie and stare and wriggle and make noises, needing to be fed and changed and taught to talk like any other child...The babyhood of the Son of God was a reality. The more you think about it, the more staggering it gets. Nothing in fiction is so fantastic as is this truth of the Incarnation.

-J.I. Packer
Knowing God

Well your eyes just haven't been the same, Joseph
Are you bad at dealing with the fame, Joseph
There's a pale moonshine above you
Do you see both sides, do they shove you around
Is the touchstone forcing you to hide, Joseph
Are the rumors eating you alive, Joseph
When the holy night is upon you
Will you do what's right, the position is yours

Better you than me Joseph, Better you than me

- Brandon Flowers, Elton John, Neil Tennant
"Better You Than Me, Joseph"

Grace Presbyterian Church

The Lord's Day, December 31, 2017

First Sunday in Christmastide

10:30 am

Prelude

Words of Welcome

Preparation for Worship¹

_____ *Praise* _____

Call to Worship

- based on **Luke 2:10-14**

Minister: Come, let us bow down to worship!

People: Let us kneel before Christ our Savior!

Minister: Rejoice, for our King has come! He will shepherd his people in righteousness!

*All: Glory to God in the highest!
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!*

¹ As a courtesy, please program all communication devices to silent mode. Thank you!

Song of Praise

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

Prayer of Adoration

Song of Adoration

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Private Praise and Adoration

_____ *Renewal* _____

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 55:6-7

Seek the Lord while he may be found;
call on him while he is near.
Let the wicked forsake their ways
and the unrighteous their thoughts.
Let them turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

Confession of Sin

*Minister &
People:*

God of birth, God of joy, God of life, we come to you as a people hungry for good news. We have been so dead to miracles that we have missed the world's rebirth. We have preoccupied ourselves with pleasures and have overlooked the joy you offer us. We have been so concerned with making a living that we have missed the life you set among us. Forgive us, gracious God.

Open our eyes and our hearts to receive your gift; open our lips and hands to share it with all humanity in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Private Confession and Reflection

Words of Encouragement

Isaiah 9:2-3, 6-7

The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness
a light has dawned.
You have enlarged the nation
and increased their joy;
they rejoice before you
as people rejoice at the harvest,
as warriors rejoice
when dividing the plunder.
For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the Lord Almighty
will accomplish this.

Song of Thanksgiving

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

The Peace of God and Announcements

Minister: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you!

If parents prefer, children 4 years old – 2nd grade are invited to attend Children's Church in the Education Building at this time.

The Prayers of the People (concluded with the Lord's prayer)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen!

Commitment

The Offering

The offering is a way for members and friends of Grace Church to support the church's mission and ministry. If you are our guest today, please feel under no compulsion to give.

Scripture Reading

Matthew 1:18-25

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. 19 Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23 "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

24 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. 25 But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Sermon

Mr. Kyle Bobos

CHRISTMAS IS THE WORST AND THE BEST NEWS THE SKEPTICS OF CHRISTMAS

Communion

Guidelines for Reception of Communion

Communion is the family meal for Christians. We welcome all committed followers of Jesus Christ to partake of this sacrament: those who are baptized members of a congregation which proclaims the gospel, who are at peace with God and with their neighbor, and who seek strength to live more faithfully for Christ. If you are not a Christian, or if you are not prepared to share in this meal, we encourage you to spend this time in prayer using the prayers that follow as guidelines. We hope that this time is helpful as you consider your relationship with Jesus Christ, and with his people, the church.

The Great Thanksgiving

Minister: Therefore, lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

People: It is right to give him thanks and praise!

Song of Communion

Angels We Have Heard On High

Prayer of Consecration and the Words of Institution

Prayer for those not communing:

Prayer for Covenant Children (Not Yet Confirmed)

Lord Jesus, thank you for placing me inside your family, the church. Help me more and more to know you, to love you, and to follow you as your faithful disciple. Amen.

Prayer for Those Searching for Truth

Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth and the life. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever before believed, but, through you, I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared to hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as my Savior. Amen.

Prayer for Those Struggling with Sin

Lord Jesus, grant that I may see in you the fulfillment of all my needs, and may turn from every false satisfaction to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely, and run with perseverance the race set before me, looking only to you, the author and finisher of my faith. Amen.

Prayer of Commitment

Lord Jesus, you have called us to follow you in baptism and in a life of committed discipleship in your church. Grant that I may take the necessary steps to be one with your people, and live in the fullness of your Spirit. Amen.

Distribution of the Bread and the Cup

Grace Presbyterian uses wine in the celebration of Holy Communion. If you prefer non-alcoholic grape juice, please take a cup from the outer circle of the tray. We ask that you would hold the elements until all have received so we can celebrate this meal together.

Silent Prayer during Communion

Song of Commitment

Joy to the World

Benediction²

May God, who sent his angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth, fill you with joy and make you heralds of the gospel. Amen.

Dismissal

Minister: Now, let us go forth to serve this community and the world as those who love our Lord Jesus Christ.

All: *Thanks be to God!*

² The benediction is much more than a wish or even a prayer. It is a renewed ordination of the people of God to their service to each other, to their community and the world. God declares his own favor toward his people.

The pastoral staff and other church leaders are available following the service to pray with you or to answer your questions about the Christian faith or Grace Church.

*Worship Music*³

Thank you for sharing your gifts and talents with Grace Presbyterian Church.

Brent Allmon, saxophone
David Kang, violin
David Fox, keyboard
Damon Henrichs, guitar
Debra Moses, flute
Rae Moses, piano
Jennifer Reddick, flute

Sermon Notes

Matthew 1:18-25

CHRISTMAS IS THE WORST AND THE BEST NEWS
THE SKEPTICS OF CHRISTMAS

³ All songs except hymns are copied under CCL # 1214497. The hymns are reprinted from *Trinity Hymnal* (© 1990, Great Commission Publications). Used by permission. All Scripture is quoted from, unless otherwise indicated, the *THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION*®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission

Welcome, Guests! We are excited you're here with us today. We hope that you were warmly welcomed and would love for you to be a part of Grace. Please take a moment to fill out the visitor information on the back of the bulletin, tear it off and drop it in the offering plate or give it on to an usher.

Parents of Infants - Three-Yr-Olds: Our nursery and early-childhood classes provide a warm, nurturing, and well-supervised environment. Our workers welcome the opportunity to love your child! When using the nursery, please check in and label all items (bags, cups, etc.) with your child's name. If you need assistance or have any questions about the Nursery, please contact our Nursery Coordinator, Natalie Webster, at nursery@gracewoodlands.org.

Cry Room: A cry room is available for the comfort of our new parents in order to ensure that everyone enjoys our services. It is located in the back of the sanctuary and it is well equipped (comfortable rockers, changing table, etc.) but if you are in need of anything, one of our ushers will be glad to assist.

Sunday Mornings at Grace

8:30 am Prayer

9:30 am Christian Education Classes

10:15 am Coffee Break

10:30 am Worship

11:45 am Intercession

Sunday Morning Prayer Ministry: To clasp hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world. We would like to invite you to be a part of this uprising at 8:30 each Sunday morning in the Prayer Room (114). Join us as we pray for the expansion of God's Kingdom.

All Christian Education Classes are on holiday break and will resume on January 14th.

Community Groups: To be part of the church is to be part of a community. Community is where we connect, build relationships, study, and serve together. Groups consist of 8-15 people meeting regularly in homes, restaurants, coffee shops, etc. Most groups meet on Sunday nights, but other times are also available. *Community Groups are currently on a Holiday Hiatus, but will resume in early January.* If you'd like to learn more community life at Grace, please contact Todd Crusey at todd@gracewoodlands.org.

Thank you from the Staff: We wanted to express our heartfelt appreciation for your kindness to us and for the wonderful Christmas gifts. It seems like such a small thing to simply say thank you. But, we are so thankful for the graciousness of our God and your love. You will never know how much your gift means to us. We take comfort in knowing that our Redeemer will not forget your sacrifice and your tenderness. Your labor, love and toleration are a song of grace to our hearts. Under the mercy, the Wilchers, the Boboses, the Cruseys, the Haskinses and Baird.

Children's Christian Education classes are offered for Preschoolers (2-3yrs old), Pre-K and Kindergarten, 1st-2nd Grade, 3rd-4th Grade, and 5th-6th Grade. Classes meet in the Education Building at 9:30 am 2nd Grade and under are on the 1st floor, 3rd Grade and above meet on the 2nd floor.

- **Children's Church** is offered for children ages 4 years old through 2nd grade. During passing of the peace, the children line up with their leader in the back of the sanctuary to exit worship. During the song of communion, children will rejoin their families to observe communion with the rest of the church body. We gather in room 108 in the Education Building to sing songs, pray, and hear a children's sermon. We also collect a children's offering during the service. This format is designed to model worship for our children and teach them the importance of meeting together as the body of Christ.
- **SNiCK and 56ers** is on holiday break and will resume in the New Year.

Student Ministry:

- **Christian Education & SNF (Sunday Night Fellowship):** We are on break over the holiday season and will resume on January 14th.

Women's Ministry Events and More! Please join the Women's Ministry on E-Connect to get involved.

- **Women's In-Town Retreat:** Our *Name Above All Names Women's Retreat* will be held here at Grace on January 19th-20th, 2018. We will begin with dinner on Friday at 6:00 pm and end after lunch on Saturday. All women are invited to an in depth study of the seven names of Jesus that reveal his work and ministry. Sign up in the Fellowship Hall or the office by January 7th. Registration is \$40 per person. If you'd like to know more, contact Kristen Chandler.
- **Girls' Night Out:** Join us at the Black Walnut Cafe (9000 New Trails), Thursday, January 4th we'll meet at 6:30 pm. Come and go as you like! Questions, contact Kristen Power.

Men's Fraternal:

- **Brew Night:** Our next monthly men's gathering is set for Tuesday, January 16th. Join us at Stadia Sports Grill (89595 Six Pines Dr #1110, The Woodlands) for dinner and fellowship starting at 6:30 pm. Come and go as you like.
- **Men's Discipleship Breakfast:** Our twice monthly men's breakfast is on break until after the holidays. We will resume at **6:30 am on Tuesday**, January 9th at the Egg & I on Research Forest. A breakfast buffet is available at \$10 per person. Steve Wilmoth will be teaching a study on the Person and Work of Jesus.

GraceCares:

- **Autumn Grove:** Just a few minutes drive from Grace, Autumn Grove Cottage, a sixteen resident assisted living home, provides care to men and women with Alzheimer's. A small group from Grace visits roughly once a month for about 30 minutes or so to sing, pray and visit with the residents. Our next visit will be **January 14th** at 1:15. We would love to have you join us. Contact Laurel Stevens or Dan Brink for more information.
- **Meals Ministry:** There are many seasons and events in life when we all need the help and encouragement of our community. The Meals Ministry seeks to enter into these times by providing meals and other means of support. If you are in need of meals, or would like to help provide meals for others, please contact our Meals Coordinator, Rhonnie Bellin.
- **Serve and Care for Grace Church members and congregation.** If you would like to know the best way to support and help those who might have financial or physical needs in our church and community, we would encourage you to consider giving to the Deacon's Fund. It is through the deacons and their ministry that Grace church provides for, supports and comes alongside those who are in need. If you have questions, please contact Matt Bradshaw
- **Prayer Ministry:** Our desire at Grace is that we take seriously the privilege of prayer and there are several ways you can participate. If you become aware of a prayer need, please communicate this to us in one of the following ways:
 - In writing: Fill out the back page of the bulletin and place it in the offering plate.
 - By phone: 281-296-0911 (Church Office)

Your requests will be communicated to our Church Staff, Officers, and our Prayer Team. If you would like to be on our Prayer Team, please let us know.

Missions Service Opportunities & Events: Contact John Zeigler for more information or to be added to our GraceMissions email list or to connect with a missions team advocate.

- **December Partner Prayer:** Please join the Missions Leadership Team in praying for these two mission partners throughout the month of December.
 - Shirley Grimes, Tamina Community Center
 - Denise Apostolo and Dana Garcia, Montgomery County Women's Center
- **Local Mission Partners**
 - Tamina Community Center | Conroe, TX
 - Montgomery County Women's Center | Montgomery County, TX
 - Cornerstone Recovery | The Woodlands, TX
 - Interfaith Family Services | The Woodlands, TX
 - Pregnancy Assistance Center North | The Woodlands, TX
 - Redeemed Ministries | The Woodlands, TX
 - Three Local Refugee Pastors: Pastor Thong Lun & Pastor Mang Tiak -Greater Houston Burmese Christian Fellowship, Pastor Bhadra Rai & wife, Ruth -Canaan Bhutanese Church of Houston, Pastor

“Andre” Onokoko Shang -International Ministries for the Propagation of the Gospel | Houston, TX
 Blake & Ryan Arnoult | RUF | University of Houston
 Juan Carlos & Samara Martínez | RUF | Rice University
 Open position | RUF | Texas A&M University
 Dennis & Jane Hermerding | King’s Cross Church | Cypress, TX
 Leo & Ellen Schuster | City Church | Houston, TX
 Bill Thomas | PCA Southwest Church Planting Network | Dallas, TX
 Oaklawn Presbyterian Church | Houston, TX
 Grace Presbyterian Diaconate

• **National Mission Partners**

Way & Amy Rutherford | RUF | Baylor University
 John & Chrissy Trapp | RUF | University of Texas
 Ryan & Laura Anderson | RUF | Texas Christian University
 Wil & Mary Nettleton | RUF | Trinity University
 Nathan & Falon Moretto | New City Presbyterian Church | Royal Oak, MI
 David & Kelly Richter | Christ the King Presbyterian Church | Somerville, MA
 Francis A. Schaeffer Institute | Covenant Theological Seminary | Saint Louis, MO
 Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) | Atlanta, GA
 Curtis & Marian Castleberry | RUF | University of Texas at San Antonio

• **International Mission Partners**

Jason & Sarah Pickard | RUF International | Texas A&M University
 Open position | RUF International | University of Texas
 Joe & Felicity Congdon | MTW | Toyosu, Tokyo, Japan
 Charlie & Bonita Davidson | MTW | Monterrey, Mexico
 Andy & Missy Shadburne | MTW | Fremantle, Perth, Australia
 David & Eowyn Stoddard | MTW | Berlin, Germany
 Arab Baptist Theological Seminary | Beirut, Lebanon
 Kay Burklin | MTW | Refugee Liaison, Europe
 Mission to The World (MTW) | Atlanta, GA

Stewardship Update: Grace thanks you so much for your generous gifts and offerings to our Savior for November 2017.

	<u>November</u>	<u>YTD</u>	
Projected Budget*	68,150	749,650	
Actual General Fund	82,332	690,434	
Variance	14,182	(59,216)	*Based on a 2017 budget of \$817,800

Grace receives more gifts in December than any other month of the year. Therefore, this is taken into account in our annual budgeting. Please keep Grace prayerfully in mind as you consider your year-end giving. If you would like to give securities or need other gift related assistance, please contact Mike Ryan.

Find & Interact with Members and Online Giving:

- **Grace Online Directory:** The link for member login can be found on the church website under the Connect tab. In addition to accessing the church directory, you can join groups and review your giving history. If you did not receive login instructions or would like to be added to the church directory, contact Dianna in the office at admin@gracewoodlands.org or 281-296-0911.
- **Grace Online Giving Portal.** If you would like to give online, you will need to setup an account. The link can be found on our website under the Care/Give tab.
- **Grace Church Mobile App (Elexio Community by Elexio)** is available for iPhone and Android and can be found by clicking the Apple App Store and Google Play icons on the church website. In addition to giving users access to the church directory and events, the mobile app also offers a mobile check-in option for the Nursery. To log on, replace "Domain" with [gracewoodlands](http://gracewoodlands.org) and use your directory username and password for the app.

Banners Explained: The visuals of the worship space change dramatically from the Fourth Sunday of Advent to the celebration of Christmas. White, yellow, and gold are the colors of Christmas. These colors bring to mind the angels, the star of peace, the shepherds, the manger, and Jesus coming to earth as the light of the world. All of these things combine to communicate that this season of Christmas is a time of joy and light.

Missed a Recent Sunday Worship? MP3s of Sunday morning messages are available on the website at www.gracewoodlands.org under Media. You can listen online, download them or subscribe to the Podcast. If you need help or are having trouble, please contact the church office @ 281-296-0911.

Church Office Information: Office Hours 8:30 am-3pm M – F | Phone: 281.296.0911 | Fax: 281.419.4345
Email: admin@gracewoodlands.org | Website: www.gracewoodlands.org

We are glad to have you as our guest today. Please use this page to let us know of your visit and to make us aware of any ideas, suggestions or concerns you may have. You may deposit this page in the offering plate as it comes by, or give it to an usher or greeter. Have confidence that no one will call or drop by your home; this is for us to have a record of your visit or your prayer requests.

Name & Email: _____

Spouse & Email: _____

Home Address: _____

Cell Phone #: _____

Home Phone #: _____

Children & Grade: _____

Please let us know if you are:

☐ Visitor ☐ Regular Attendee ☐ One time visit from out of town

I am interested in learning about:

☐ Community Groups ☐ Music ☐ Usher, Greeter ☐ Sunday Volunteer
☐ Children's Ministry ☐ Women's Ministry ☐ Student Ministry ☐ Men's Ministry

Prayer Request:

☐ I would like the prayer team to pray for the following needs or concerns:

☐ I would like to speak with someone about this prayer request or other spiritual concern; please have someone contact me at: _____.

Prayer of Belief...

*Lord Jesus Christ, I admit that I am weaker and more
sinful than I ever before believed, but through you, I am
more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope.*

*I thank you for paying my debt on the cross, bearing my
punishment and offering forgiveness.*

*Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn
from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.*