

Grace Weekly Email Update

December 3, 2025

Message from Pastor Jeff

If you have not received your advent devotion yet, it's not too late to start. You can find a copy [HERE](#). May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts and minds this week!



We are going to have [Christmas Eve](#) invite cards for you this Sunday. The Christmas Eve service is one of those moments when people who never would think about coming to a church service are actually willing to come. Don't let anyone miss this beautiful service simply because no one invited them. Services will be at 4pm and 6pm. If you are able to come to the 6pm service, I would encourage you to attend that one so that we can make more space for guests at the 4pm service.

On the Sunday after Christmas, December 28, we are going to combine all of our worship services into one worship service at 10am. We don't often all get to be in the room together at one time, so that should be a great time of worship. We will go back to our normal schedule of services the following week (8:30am, 9:30am, and 11:00am on January 4, and 6pm on January 5).

I still have a few testimonies trickling in and have enjoyed every one of them. I'd love to hear yours! Consider it a Christmas gift to me. See you this weekend as we remember His birth and look forward to His coming!

Jeff

WORSHIP SERVICES — December 7 & 8

Traditional (8:30am Sunday) 2nd Sunday of Advent

Hymns: Hail to the Lord's Anointed
It Came Upon the Midnight Clear
In the Bleak Midwinter

Modern (9:30 & 11:00am Sunday, 6pm Monday)

Songs: Angels From the Realms of Glory; O Come All Ye Faithful
Peace Be Still; Hope Has Come

Live Stream @ 9:30am Sunday: [Facebook](#) & [YouTube](#)

Past Sermons/Materials: Click [HERE](#).

Grace Community Church

4001 Brooken Hill Dr., Fort Smith, AR 72908

479.646.1177

contact@gracefs.com

Office Hours: 9-5 Monday-Thursday

www.gracefs.com

*Grace Community Church exists for the glory of God,
to make visible the kingdom of God, and
to declare the grace of God to all the world.*

KIDS MINISTRY

NEW!



Kids Church Infants—PreK Contact: [Christine Turpin](#)

These next few weeks will help little ones prepare their hearts for Jesus. Each week they will learn a new part of the Christmas story -- Hope from the prophets, Peace in Bethlehem where Jesus was born, Joy from the shepherds who heard the good news, and Love from the angels who celebrated Christ's arrival. Together, they will show children the true meaning of Christmas: Jesus, God's promised Savior.



NEW!



Kids Church K-5th Grade Contact: [Sarah Reykers](#)

Join us as we learn about the true meaning of Christmas through the colors of Christmas!

Our new verse:

"Love your neighbor as yourself" Matthew 22:39



Grace Kids Needs VOLUNTEERS!!

Grace Kids Ministry has GROWN and we need you! We have volunteer opportunities to teach the lesson and to be a helper in the room. You can serve as little as once a month or as much as every Sunday! [Email](#) or text (479-414-2071) Sarah to start teaching little disciples!

Spring Weekend Retreat (3rd-5th Graders)

Camp Siloam, April 10-12, 2026

Instead of a full week camp in summer 2026, we are doing a spring weekend retreat! It will be at the same location, [Camp Siloam](#). The tentative plan is to leave Grace around 3:30 on



that Friday so we have time to stop and eat and arrive by check-in time. We will return Sunday around noon.

Cost is \$130 with a \$35 nonrefundable deposit due at

time of registration. The remaining balance can be paid out over the next few months. We will send reminders and a link to pay the installments. PLEASE do not let cost be an issue. We have scholarships available for those that may need it. Please let [Sarah Reyers](#) know if you need financial assistance.

As we get more details closer to time, we will pass them along. Register [HERE](#).

DASH & FM

(6-8th grades) & (9-12th grades)

Contact [Dana](#) For DASH and FM

Dash/FM Page on Grace Website—Click [HERE](#)



Youth Wednesday Nights, 6-7:30pm, Student Ministry Bldg



**Food Drive goes through December 10.
There is still time to compete!**



Confirmation Class, Sundays, January 11-March 15

9:30-10:30am in the Student Ministry Bldg.

For 6th Graders and Older

Theme: A Deeper Understanding In Our Faith Journey

For more details and sign ups, click [HERE](#).



CONNECT—On Going Groups



Upper Room Daily Devotional Discussion Group **1st & 3rd Wednesdays** **1-2pm, Activity Center**

Using the Upper Room Daily Devotional Guide, ladies discuss the daily reading and the Bible verses as a launching pad for in-depth discussions to include sharing personal experiences. Class is led by Ava Imotichey.



By Hook, Needle & Craft Women's Group **1st & 3rd Thursdays** **1pm, Activity Center**

Join a group of women who love crafts and visiting with each other. Crafts include knitting, crewel, needlepoint, cross-stitch and any other craft you wish to do. If you are gifted with these talents or want to learn, join these ladies in this wonderful ministry. On the few occasions when the first day of the month falls on a Thursday, meetings will be on 2nd & 4th Thursdays. Class is led by Mary Carter.



Men's Fellowship Lunch **1st Thursdays, Dec. 4, 12pm** **The Egg of Fort Smith** **3801 Planters Rd.**

Join men from Grace the first Thursday of each month, 12pm at The Egg of Fort Smith for a meal, fellowship and updates on our Men's Ministry. There is no need to sign up. We usually meet from noon-1pm. Invite a friend or co-worker.



Singles Ministry **Thrive Monthly Lunch** **1st Saturday Each Month, Noon** **Anthony's Italian Restaurant**

Are you looking to find a community at Grace? Join the Thrive- Single's ministry for a monthly lunch full with conversation, connection, and yummy Italian food! Thrive will meet every 1st Saturday of the Month. The lunch will be hosted at Anthony's Italian Restaurant. No need to sign-up, just come when you can! If you have any questions please reach out to [Reagan Newell](#). Dec 6

EVENTS

Ladies Christmas Tea—**THIS Saturday**, December 6 10-11:30am, Worship Center

Join the ladies of Grace for a festive Christmas tea/brunch. We will worship together and hear a wonderful message from our speaker **Jenn Jett Barret**. Our theme this year is "A Thrill of Hope". In the midst of all of life's struggles we want to begin the Christmas season grounded in the Hope that the birth of Christ brings us. We are women who have the privilege of living with a hope that the world cannot offer, we want to celebrate that truth together!



Drop & Shop, **THIS Saturday**, December 6, 12-4pm

Need a few hours to get your Christmas shopping done without little eyes watching? We've got you covered! Drop your kiddos off for a fun-filled afternoon while you check off that gift list. Kids will enjoy a day packed with holiday fun: hotdogs for lunch, cookie decorating, Christmas crafts, and Minute to Win It games that will keep them laughing and busy! Drop-off & Pick-up will be in the Student Ministry Building main entrance. Spots are LIMITED, so don't wait to register! The Cost is \$10 per child. It's a win for parents and kids -- you shop, they play! Sign up [HERE](#).



Family Advent Study, started Nov. 30

As a church, Advent invites us to remember the first coming of Jesus and to joyfully anticipate His second coming. Sunday, November 30th marks the beginning of the Advent season. Over the four weeks leading up to Christmas, we will reflect on the Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love revealed through the birth of Christ. This is a meaningful time for us to slow down, refocus our hearts, and walk together toward the celebration of Jesus' arrival.

To help guide you through this season, we've created a simple, family-friendly Advent study. Each week includes five daily devotionals with a short reading, a Scripture passage, and reflection questions for young children, teens, and adults. For those who enjoy hands-on activities, each week also includes a weekend challenge designed to help your family practice what you've been learning. Advent guides will be available for pick-up in the church lobby this Sunday November 23rd or in the church office. There are electronic copies available on the front page of the [website](#). If you have any questions please reach out to [Reagan Newell](#).



Christmas Choir

It is not too late to be a part of the Christmas Choir. To find information on rehearsal times, important dates, skills needed, and other things pertaining to the Christmas choir, click [HERE](#). To sign up, click [HERE](#).

Rehearsal times are as follows:

- Sundays, Nov. 2—Dec 14, 12:30-2pm, Chapel
- Wednesday, Dec. 17, 5:30-7:30pm, choir and band, worship center
- Sunday, Dec. 21: (Day of service) 7:30-9am, final run-through with full band and choir in the worship center



EVENTS

Christmas Eve Services Wednesday December 24 4 & 6 PM

Join us for our special Christmas Eve Service!

Come celebrate the joy of Christmas with worship, a message, and our traditional candlelight moment to close the evening. Kids Church will be available for children 5 and under. We can't wait to celebrate with you!



New Year's Eve Dinner Youth Camp Fundraiser

Our youth have planned a special evening on New Year's Eve. There will be good food, and fellowship. The evening begins at 6:30pm in the Student Ministry Building. There is free childcare for children 4th grade and below from 6-8pm. Reserve your spot by clicking on the UPC code to the right or on the link [HERE](#).



Free Childcare (4th grade and below) 6-8 pm

Reserve your spot today



All proceeds go directly toward
sending students to camp.

SERVE

Contact [Michelle Thomas](#) for more information on local mission efforts.

Contact [Kathleen Halliburton](#) for more information on mission efforts outside of our community.

VBS "Wish List"

As you are taking advantage of "Black Friday" upcoming sales, go out to the ["Wish List"](#) for our VBS program happening this summer. Amazon has some great sales on a few items right now! When you place your order, the items will be shipped directly to Sarah at the church address with a notation of who purchased the item. If you see these same items in other stores at a better price, feel free to purchase them and drop these items to the kids checkin station or at the church office.



Families in Transition Gifts—Due Back THIS Sunday, Dec. 7 Help Still Needed on Distribution Day

We need volunteers to help distribute gifts as the families come to Grace and pick them up. A prayer and invitation to our Christmas Eve service is a wonderful way to share the Good News and to love people in our community. Please contact [Erin DeLassus](#) for more information.



Giving Away Christmas

Giving Away Christmas boxes will be available for your donations in the worship center. We are collecting items for 1st Choice Pregnancy and Medical Center, Heart to Heart Pregnancy and Family Center, and Almost Home Shelter for animals. Please see the [list](#) for the most requested items for these organizations.



Heart to Heart Pregnancy Center

- Diapers, Size 4-6
- Baby wipes
- Shoes: Boys and Girls sizes 4 - 9; can be gently used, no holes
- Clothing: Sizes 2T and 3T; can be gently used

1st Choice Pregnancy Medical Center

- Diapers, Size 4-6
- Baby wipes
- Shoes: Boys and Girls sizes 4 - 9; can be gently used, no holes
- Clothing: Sizes 2T and 3T; can be gently used
- Small sized personal hygiene products for moms

Almost Home Animal Shelter

- Clorox wipes
- Dawn liquid soap
- Paper towels
- Trash bags (45/55 gallon)
- Puppy pads
- Pedigree Choice Cuts in Gravy
- Dry Pedigree dog food
- Dog treats (no rawhide, pig ears, or beef hide)
- Blankets—small, low cost
- Towels
- Peanut butter
- Vienna Sausage
- Cat food
- Cat litter
- Cat toys

GRACE

Nicaragua Teams Mission Trip

We have opened the dates for Team 3 on August 1-8 and will add a Team 4 the following week if needed. If you are interested in going, please don't wait to [sign up](#). We will be doing a few fundraisers to help offset costs and scholarship assistance is available. If you aren't interested in going on the trip but want to be a part of someone's story, contact Kathleen to discuss the possibilities. Please pray for our Teams, the people still considering going, the families in Nicaragua that we will be serving and for the El Porvenir staff. Please contact [Kathleen](#) if you have any questions.



OTHER



Hiring Part Time Position could turn into full time.

Grace Place mission is to provide a loving, Christian environment that builds a spiritual, intellectual, and physical foundation for the development of the whole Child. If you love kids and Christ Grace Place is the place for you.

Stop into Grace Place anytime between 7am-5:30pm to pick up an application, or contact the Grace Place office at (479)646-6503

Two Trips to Europe in 2026 with EO Travel
Leaders: [Staci Moore](#) and Jim Acklin
Info Meetings Coming Soon
Click on the name of the tour to read more.

[Footsteps of Bonhoeffer & the Reformation](#)

(Sept. 21—Oct.1, 2026)

Join Grace Community Church for the Footsteps of Bonhoeffer and the Reformation, starting at \$5,196* from Fayetteville, on September 21, 2026. You will see the Church of St. Elizabeth, the original village of Lehde, Cecilienhof Palace, the Church of Peace, the picturesque old city of Potsdam, Lutherstadt Wittenberg, Torgau, Leipzig, the door of the Castle Church, Eisleben, Erfurt, St. Nicholas Church, Weimar, Frankfurt area, St. Thomas Church, the Church of St. Peter and Paul, St. Andrew's Church, St. Anne's Church, Wartburg Castle, and much more!

(11 Days in Germany & Poland)

Register Early & Save

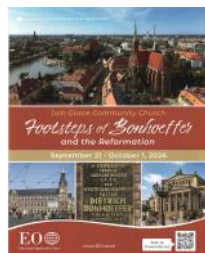
\$100 Register by December 21, 2025

\$75 Register by January 21, 2026

\$50 Register by February 21, 2026

\$25 Register by March 21, 2026

Full deposit required. Savings are deducted from the balance.



[Splendors of Italy](#)

(Oct. 12-22, 2026)

Grace Community Church on a Splendors of Italy tour, starting at \$5,196* from Fayetteville, AR on October 13, 2026. You will see Lake Garda, Verona, Venice, the Piazza San Marco, the Basilica of St. Mark, the romantic Bridge of Sighs, Pisa, Lucca, Florence, San Gimignano, Siena, Assisi, the magnificent Colosseum, the Pantheon, the Circus Maximus, the Arch of Titus, the famous Baths of Caracalla, the Arch of Constantine, and much more!

Register Early & Save

\$125 Register by December 13, 2025

\$100 Register by January 13, 2026

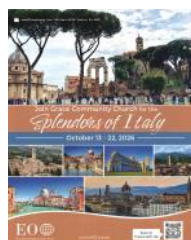
\$75 Register by February 13, 2026

\$50 Register by March 13, 2026

\$25 Register by April 13, 2026

(10 Days in Italy)

Full deposit required. Savings are deducted from the balance.



MENTAL HEALTH MINISTRY

Contact [Rick](#) for more information.



Message from Kerry Underwood, MS, LPC, LMFT



Coping with Grief and Loss During the Holidays

The holiday season is often seen as a time of joy and celebration, a time to gather with loved ones, share meals, and create memories. However, for those who are grieving the loss of a loved one, the holidays can be a painful reminder of their absence. The emptiness that comes with loss can feel particularly heavy as we witness the festive spirit around us. If you are struggling with grief this season, know that you are not alone, and there are ways to find peace and comfort, even in the midst of sorrow.

Acknowledging Your Grief

The first step in coping with grief during the holidays is to acknowledge your emotions. It's okay to feel sadness, anger, or even numbness. Grief is a complex journey, and it doesn't follow a set timeline. The Bible offers comfort in this regard, reminding us that God sees our pain and is close to the brokenhearted. Psalm 34:18 says, "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."

Remember, there is no right or wrong way to grieve. Allow yourself the space and grace to feel what you feel. Whether you need to cry, take a moment of solitude, or express your emotions with others, give yourself permission to grieve in your own way.

Tips for Coping with Loss During the Holidays

1. Create New Traditions

It may be helpful to adjust your holiday traditions in a way that feels more manageable. If certain activities or rituals bring up painful memories, consider starting new traditions that honor your loved one in a different way. For instance, you could light a candle in their memory or write a letter to them expressing your thoughts and feelings.

2. Reach Out for Support

It can be easy to isolate yourself, but reaching out for support is vital. Surround yourself with understanding family members, friends, or a support group. Romans 12:15 encourages us to "Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn." Sharing your grief with others can lighten the burden, reminding you that you are not alone in your sorrow.

3. Take Care of Yourself

Grieving is exhausting, physically and emotionally. During the holidays, it's especially important to care for your body and mind. This might mean taking breaks from holiday events when you feel overwhelmed or practicing self-care, such as taking walks, journaling, or engaging in prayer or meditation. Jesus reminds us in Matthew 11:28, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." Let this promise be a comfort to you, knowing that even in your weariness, Christ offers rest and peace.

4. Embrace the Gift of Presence

One of the most beautiful aspects of the Christmas season is the reminder of God's presence with us. In the midst of our sorrow, we can take comfort in the truth that Jesus is Emmanuel—God with us (Matthew 1:23). Lean into this presence by setting aside time to reflect on God's love and faithfulness. Prayer and scripture can be powerful tools in finding peace, as they remind us that we are not alone in our grief.

MENTAL HEALTH MINISTRY—continued

5. Honor the Memory of Your Loved One

Finding ways to honor the memory of your loved one during the holidays can provide a sense of connection. You might consider creating a photo album, making a donation in their name, or simply reflecting on the good times you shared. Proverbs 31:25 says, “She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come.” Honoring your loved one in meaningful ways helps to celebrate their life while also allowing room for healing.

6. Give Yourself Permission to Enjoy Moments of Joy

It’s okay to laugh, to celebrate, and to experience joy, even while grieving. Grief and joy can coexist. Ecclesiastes 3:4 reminds us that there is “a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance.” Allow yourself the grace to experience moments of joy, without guilt. Healing often comes in waves, and it’s important to embrace those moments when they come.

Finding Hope in the Midst of Loss

While the holidays can magnify the ache of loss, they can also be a time to reflect on the hope we have in Christ. The birth of Jesus is a reminder that God understands our pain. In Jesus, we find a Savior who knows suffering, who wept at the death of His friend Lazarus (John 11:35). He is a God who offers us comfort and the hope of eternal life, where there will be no more sorrow or pain (Revelation 21:4).

As we navigate grief during the holiday season, let us hold on to the truth of God’s promises. He is near to the brokenhearted and will carry us through our darkest days. May we find peace in His presence and hope in the assurance that He will make all things new.

Prayer for Comfort

Heavenly Father,

We come before You with heavy hearts, grieving the loss of our loved ones or the loss of life as we knew it. We ask for Your comfort and peace to surround us during this holiday season. Help us to acknowledge our sorrow and lean into Your presence for strength. Give us the grace to honor our loved ones and to find moments of joy amidst our grief. May Your promise of eternal life fill us with hope. We trust in Your faithfulness, knowing that You are with us, always.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

As we walk through this season, remember that you are not alone in your grief. We, as a church family, are here to support you, and more importantly, God is with you, comforting, healing, and holding you close. May you feel His peace during this season.

Kerry



Meet our team: Click [HERE](#).

Mental Health Resources: Click [HERE](#).

Mental Health page on our website: Click [HERE](#).

PRAYER

If you have prayer needs, please submit request [HERE](#).

Community & World

Unsaved
United States
Countries in Turmoil
All Military
Foster and Adoptive Parents
Victims of Violence
Weather Disaster Victims
Eight Days of Hope Ministry
Those who are sick
Those struggling w/mental illness & addictions
Those struggling with grief
Christians in Nigeria
Holiday Travelers

Grace Families

Jim Sharp
Tuckers' new grandson, Rhet
Brenda Hamilton

Grace Friends

Co-Worker with Cancer
Bobby Jones
Father addicted to alcohol

Sympathies

Tim Vair's Family and Friends

UPCOMING EVENTS

Watch for future articles or click on the link.

Women's Event

IF: One Night, Friday, February 27, 2026, 5:30-10pm