

Grace Weekly Email Update

February 18, 2026

Message from Pastor Jeff



The forty days between now and Easter (not counting Sundays) is called Lent. For those who observe Lent, fasting takes a prominent place. Jesus assumed his followers would fast (Matthew 6:16). Fasting was a consistent practice for all God's people throughout Scripture. It is also one of the most misunderstood practices.

Fasting is not about punishing yourself or showing how devoted you are, but is about making space for God and reminding yourself of where all the true good comes from. Fasting is simply choosing to step away from something you normally rely on for a set time in order to create space for God to work in your life in a fresh way. You can fast from food, social media, meat, soda, or any other thing that you regularly reach for.

One of the gifts of fasting is that it reveals what we turn to for comfort or control. When we remove something familiar that we normally reach for, we become aware of our desires, our restlessness, our impatience, and our anxieties. Fasting gives us the opportunity to bring all these things to God and to recognize that He alone is our ultimate satisfaction and peace.

For followers of Jesus, these times of fasting aren't focused on what we are giving up, but rather on the One who graciously gives us life. Therefore, we don't boast in our fast or go around looking miserable, but live with the joy of those who have discovered the treasure of relationship with God. I encourage you during these forty days to consider joining us in fasting as we prepare ourselves to celebrate the good news of Christ's resurrection.

Yours in Christ,

Jeff

WORSHIP SERVICE — February 22 & 23

Traditional (8:30am Sunday)

Hymns: Rock of Ages; The Old Rugged Cross

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

Songs: I Believe; The Lord Will Provide
He Who Is To Come, Holy Spirit

Live Stream @ 10am Sunday: [Facebook](#) & [YouTube](#)

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

Holy Communion Celebrated at all services.

Grace Community Church

4001 Brooken Hill Dr. / Fort Smith, AR 72908 / 479.646.1177

Email: contact@gracefs.com / Office Hours: 9-5 Monday-Thursday

Website: 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

Jr. Kids: Infants—PreK Contact: [Christine Turpin](#)
Kids Church K-5th Grade Contact: [Sarah Reykers](#)

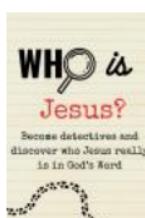


Jr. Kids February Theme:

Bubbles: Jesus' Love Is Clear To Me

Bubbles are endlessly fascinating to look at, to blow, and to pop! In this series, toddlers and preschoolers will play with bubbles, and through their play learn some important lessons about the love of Jesus.

Memory Verse: "We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love." 1 John 4:16a



Kids Church K-5th Grade

We are kicking off the New Year learning about prayer and Who Jesus is. We will become detectives and discover who Jesus really is in God's word by answering questions and collecting clues. What will we discover about Jesus?

Memory Verse: "Shout for joy to the Lord." Psalm 100:1



Painting + Pastries, Feb. 21, 9-11am

Girls K-5th Grade, Activity Center

Join us for a sweet morning of creativity and fun just for the gals! Girls are invited to come paint, eat some yummy pastries, and hear a short devotional. We hope you can join us! Sign up [HERE](#)! Contact [Sarah](#) with any questions!



Nerf Wars + Nachos, Feb. 21, 1-3pm

Boys (K-5th) are invited to an action-packed afternoon from 1-3 PM in StuMin! We'll battle it out in epic Nerf wars, enjoy nachos, and wrap up with a short devotional. Sign up [HERE](#)! If you have any questions contact [Sarah](#).



Kids Worship and Pizza

Wednesday, March 4

6-7:30pm

Drop your kids off from 6-7:30pm for a night of worship, dinner and hanging out. [Sign up](#) is required so we know how much pizza to order.



VBS — Coming Up Soon—June 7-10

Need Volunteers + Old T-shirts/Towels

What A Mess VBS is underway! Sign up [HERE](#) to volunteer. Have questions? Text (479-414-2071) or email [Sarah](#)! **Also, looking for donations of old towels and old adult size t-shirts.**

DASH & FM

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

Contact Dana For DASH and FM

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



Join Us on Wednesday Evenings 6-7:30pm

During the school year, DASH and FM meet routinely every Wednesday from 6-7:30pm. We have dinner, games, worship, biblical lessons, and small groups. Small groups are split by grade level and male/female.



Senior Sunday, April 26, 11:00 Service

Luncheon for Students and Their Families to Follow

We will recognize and celebrate our graduating seniors on April 26. If you have a senior that we may not be aware of, please contact Dana. We are asking that you send info about your senior as well as three pictures...two from their childhood and one current picture. Pictures and info must be emailed to Dana by March 30 in order to have the Senior Brochure prepared in time for Senior Sunday. Following the service we will have a special meal for the seniors and their families. In order to prepare for this meal, we ask that you PLEASE complete [this form](#) no later than March 15.

NEW!

**DASH
SUMMER CAMP**

Upcoming 6th -8th graders

June 14-17, 2026

Encounter Cove, MO

Lake of the Ozarks

For more info  to Sign up

Sign up deadline Nov. 30th

Spots are Limited. Sign up soon!

\$100 deposit

**DASH
SUMMER CAMP**

Total Cost: \$500

Lots of Fundraising opportunities

High-energy worship

Powerful messages

Crazy fun activities and games

New friendships

Unforgettable memories

A chance to grow deeper in faith and discover who God created you to be

Payment Installment Deadlines:

Nov 30-----Dec 31-----Jan 31-----Mar 31-----May 31

DASH: 6 Spots Open!

FM: 7 Spots Open!

*****March 1: Registration Deadline*****

**HIGH SCHOOL
SUMMER
•CAMP•**

Upcoming 9th graders - graduated seniors

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2026

Cleveland, TN,

SIGN UP DEADLINE
NOVEMBER 30TH TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT \$100



Scan the QR code to sign up or get more information

SPOTS ARE LIMITED
SIGN UP EARLY!

**HIGH SCHOOL
SUMMER
•CAMP•**

Total Camp Cost: \$500

We'll be doing fundraisers to lower the cost for everyone who participates!

WHY YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS THIS CAMP:

- An awe-inspiring week in Cleveland, TN
- Life changing messages
- Powerful worship
- Crazy fun with students from across the country
- A chance to grow in faith, build friendships, and discover what God has next for you.

Payment Installment Deadlines:

Nov 30-----Dec 31-----Jan 31-----Mar 31-----May 31

CONNECT—Community Groups

For all groups listed below: Full details & sign up click [HERE](#).
Contact [JD Cunny](#) for any questions.

Sunday Sermon Recap, On Going

UPDATED

Sundays following the 8:30 service until about 10:15am

Starting Feb. 22 the class meets in the church office conf. rm.

Facilitator: Becky Ruth

Type: Co-Ed, all are welcome! Status: Open

Sunday Sermon Recap, **Wednesdays**, 6-7:30pm

UPDATED

January 27-March 17 (8 Weeks), Church Office

Facilitator: Scott Tidwell

Type: Men's Community Group Status: Open

This Men's Weekly Sermon Recap Group exists to create space for that kind of connection as we gather to revisit Sunday messages, ask honest questions, and talk through how God's Word applies to real life.

Sunday Sermon Recap, Wednesday Evenings 6-7:30pm

January 28-March 18 (8 Weeks), Upstairs Blue Room at Grace

Facilitators: Robert + Natalie Cole

Type: Couples Status: Open

The purpose of our community group is to create a space for couples/married people to come and build lasting relationships with others who want to center their marriage around God.

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 Birdsong.



Men's Fellowship Lunch
1st Thursday of Each Month
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.



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.

CONNECT—Bible Studies

Contact [JD Cunny](#) for any questions.

The Book of Mark Study, Wednesday Evenings

Facilitators: Justus and Baylee Brown

Location: Brown Residence

For Young Couples and Singles

Status: Open

Journey through the Gospel of Mark, verse by verse and story by story to encounter Jesus as He is revealed through

action, compassion, and power.

Together, we'll explore what it means to follow Christ with faith, urgency, and obedience, discovering how His life and teachings speak into our

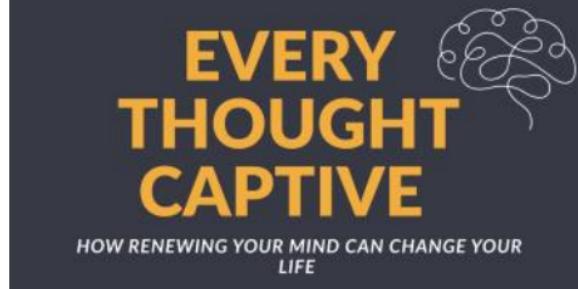
everyday lives. This study is designed for meaningful discussion, deeper understanding of Scripture, and growing together in community. Sign-Up [HERE](#).



Every Thought Captive Study

Monday Evenings 6-8pm, Starting March 2, 8 weeks

Join Rick Ralston and Erin Delassus for this study about taking every thought captive. Kyle Idleman helps us forge a path through the world's distractions and lies and gets to the



heart of true spiritual growth: the renewing of your mind. This isn't a study on the power of positive thinking but about learning how God

made your brain. Learn how setting your thoughts on Christ can create new patterns of thought that will change your life. Childcare is available if needed, sign-up required. Sign-Up [HERE!](#)

EVENTS



Ash Wednesday

Services

February 18

12noon and 6pm

Ash Wednesday invites us to remember who we are

and whose we are. Join us as we begin Lent together, reflecting on God's mercy and grace as we prepare our hearts for Easter.



Men's Shrimp Boil

Tuesday, February 24

6-7:30pm

Student Ministry Bldg

Join us for a Men's Shrimp Boil! A fun evening of

delicious food, fellowship and encouragement. This is a great opportunity to connect with other men, build community and share a meal together. The cost is \$10 per person, first time guests eat free. Contact JD Cunny with any questions! Register [HERE](#).



IF: One Night

Friday, February 27

5:30-10pm

Grace Worship Center

We will be hosting the IF: One Night Gathering for

women. The event will be from 5:30PM-10:00PM, you are of course free to leave early if needed. We will be providing dinner and refreshments throughout the night. We have always enjoyed the IF: Gatherings in the past and are excited for what the Lord will do this year. I am so thankful for the technology that allows us to virtually worship with other women from around the nation and world. We will not be providing childcare for this event but would welcome youth aged girls to join us if they would like! I think they would really enjoy it.

Please sign-up as soon as possible so that we can begin making final plans for food! **The deadline to sign-up is Friday, February 20.** Speakers are: Jennie Allen, Christine Caine, Francis Chan, Lauren Chandler, Jada Edwards, Davy Flowers, Layla de la Garza. Fee is \$10. Register [HERE](#). Questions contact Reagan Newell.

EVENTS



Men's Fish Fry

Tuesday, March 24, 6-7:30pm

Student Ministry Building

Join us for a Men's Fish Fry—a fun evening of great food, fellowship, and

encouragement. It's a simple way to connect with other men, build community, and share a meal together. Cost: \$10 per person (first-time guests eat free) Questions? Contact [JD Cunny](#). Register [HERE](#).

For King and Kingdo

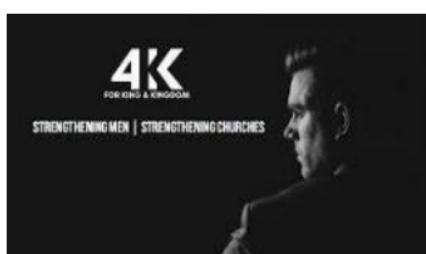
Men's Retreat

Wednesday-Sunday

April 15-19

Burning Bush Lodge

Wrightsville, AR



A For King and Kingdom retreat is designed to inspire, unite, and set men free to pursue their Kingdom destiny alongside other men who want more of God. Through teaching, reflection, and shared experience, we grow by knowing God, knowing ourselves, and knowing others at a deeper level.

Many men in the church feel stuck—tired, distracted, or living on autopilot. This retreat is a call to wake up the heart, strengthen the spirit, and reawaken the warrior within. The church of Jesus needs men of courage and conviction—men willing to surrender fully to King Jesus and live for His Kingdom mission.

If you'd like more information or are interested in attending, contact [JD Cunny](#) or 479-806-8711.

Cost: \$300 (Scholarships and payment arrangements are available. Space is limited.)

Register [HERE](#).

Men's 3rd Annual Buffalo River Float Trip

Wednesday-Saturday, April 22-25

Steel Creek Campground, Ponca, AR

Men are invited to arrive when they are able. We have reserved Spots 9-11, on the river, three sites for 18 tents.

There are restrooms and water on site.

There will be Camping, Food, Fire, and Fellowship!

Canoeing on Saturday (Steel Creek to Kyle's Landing @ 8 mi)

Renting canoes, paddles, PFDs

May bring your own boat.

Cost \$120...covers food, canoe, firewood and supplies.

Pre-registration with Grace is HIGHLY ENCOURAGED !!

Register [HERE](#).

Looking Forward to another Special Time !!

Questions: Call or text KEN DUNCAN 479-285-9600.



SERVE

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

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

Where are YOU being called to Serve?

We have a summary of our Local Community Partners and their Mission on our Grace Community Church [website's Serve page](#). You can look at the age of people the organization supports, or category, such as families, pregnancy support, etc.

We are blessed to have a Mighty "Serve Team" as dedicated liaisons. These Grace volunteers can provide so much information about what they do with their Partners, and you likely know some of the people that serve with them. It's a great way to meet others from Grace and people in our community.

Please look at the [website](#) to see if a mission speaks to you. Click on the [Serve Team liaison's name](#) and drop them an email. Ask more about it! Ask if you can help. Let Jesus help lead you to serving by taking the first step.

Serve Delivery Team Volunteers Needed

Do you have time during the week to help Serve by delivering items to our community partners? We are updating our Delivery Team members. Items like food, household items, baby and child supplies, and other miscellaneous things need to be delivered to our community partners and people in need. Please let [Michelle Thomas](#) know if you would like more information.



VBS "Wish List"

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.

SERVE

The CALL Bunny Breakfast and 5K & Family Fun Run Saturday, March 21

Be sure to read the CALL's February newsletter attached to today's email.



River Park Event Buildings - 121 Riverfront Dr. Fort Smith

Rabbit Run 5k and Family Fun Run



- \$40 for the 5k and \$20 for the Fun Run.
- All runners get a t-shirt and Finisher medal.
- Easter Themed Awards!
- Best Bunny Costume award for runners.



The Bunny Breakfast is FREE!

- Pancake Breakfast
- Crafts and Games
- Story Time and Sing-a-long
- Easter Bunny Photo Booth
- Bounce Around, Baby bunnies and MORE!
- Egg Hunt with Harvest Time starts at 10AM!



Eight Days of Hope Buffalo, NY Outreach July 18-25, 2026

NEW!

Are you looking for a mission trip, but don't want to travel outside the United States? Maybe Buffalo is just the opportunity you are

looking for. We will be serving people in a district that has substantial needs. This is a great trip for families and people of all ages to serve together. Projects will include all skill levels. Lodging and meals are provided while serving with EDOH.

If riding on the church bus seems to be too much for you, you can fly at your own expense and arrangements for transportation to and from the airport will be available. There are lots of variables to this mission opportunity. If you can't be gone for that many days but still want to serve, please contact [Kathleen](#) to discuss alternatives.

Details are still being finalized, please sign up [HERE](#) if you are interested and would like more information.



OTHER

Information Meetings for Trips to Germany and Italy

Sunday, February 22, 10:30am, Chapel

Doc Acklin and Staci Moore will have an informational meeting about the two upcoming trips to Germany and Italy on Sunday, February 22 at 10:30am in the chapel. There will be no obligation to sign up at this time. This is just a Q & A session to pass along info.

Two Trips to Europe in 2026 with EO Travel

Leaders: [Staci Moore](#) and Jim Acklin

Click on the name of the tour to read more.

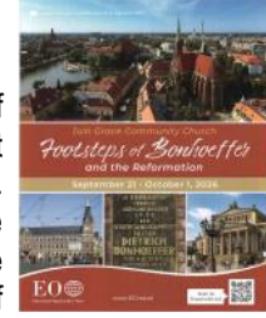
[Footsteps of Bonhoeffer & the Reformation](#)

(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!

Full deposit required. Savings are deducted from the balance.

(11 Days in Germany & Poland)



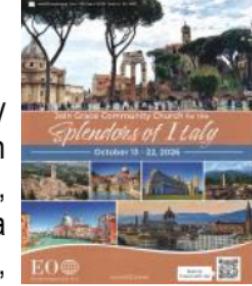
[Splendors of Italy](#)

(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!

Full deposit required. Savings are deducted from the balance.

(10 Days in Italy)



MENTAL HEALTH MINISTRY

[Mental Health](#)

Ministry



Scan this code to get in touch with our mental health ministry!

Are you concerned about your potential mental health or that of a family member? Do you struggle with knowing who you can talk to? Do you carry the conscious concern that others can't hear? Perhaps you are curious in these areas, but are just not sure what the next right step is or who to even contact? The team is here to help!

[Meet Our Team](#)

[Mental Health Resources](#)

[Mental Health Page](#)

OTHER



Grace Men Help Lead Men's Retreat in Turkey from Rick Ralston

Recently, Scott Tidwell and I were blessed to be part of a once in a lifetime opportunity to not only travel internationally, but to serve in the name of Christ. We wanted to share some of this experience with our church family for both encouragement of this ongoing ministry, prayers for the people we encountered, and the work they will do moving forward.

In the small town in Turkey, we spent five days serving nine men. Three of them were Americans who have spent many years there on mission, working diligently to spread the Good News. The other six were native Turkish men, in search of something different, TRUTH.



Organizing an international men's retreat was a first for the Hot Springs based ministry, For King and Kingdom (4KK). 4KK was established to call men into their kingdom destiny, leaving behind the events and experiences of the past that so often rule us, keeping men from becoming the Christian leader they are called to be. 4KK has had over 2000 men experience the retreat. The ministry has twenty-three participating churches, operating in five states. Grace Community is one of those churches. Grace has had twenty-five men who have participated in what the men in Turkey were blessed to experience.

While we were serving these men, we witnessed release of burdens, freedom from strongholds, brotherly connection and bonding, that glorified God and established the Kingdom in the here and now. This is a big deal when we witness this at one of our Grace retreats, but something about it being in Turkey magnified it.

Turkish culture is predominantly Muslim, only .4% of the population identifies as Christian. While persecution is not overt, there is much discrimination related to being Christian. We were advised to keep a low profile. There were many struggles discussed as these brave men left family and friends to pursue the One True God. These men displayed passion for the pursuit of God and a passion for the souls of those they knew did not know TRUTH.

Listening to prayers for other men in the Turkish language moved us. We did not know what was being said, but it didn't matter. So many things divide us, language, food, habits, lifestyle differences, clothing choices, etc... but prayer to our God in any language unites.

We were blessed by an invitation to a Sunday Christian Church Service and Communion. Songs we knew were sung in Turkish, but that did not inhibit our worship or reverence for God, it only enhanced it. What God was doing in that place was on full display. The pastor's message was on Psalm 77. Lord, have you abandoned me? Have you not heard my cries? The pastor made a bold case for the experience and voice of God in the midst of difficulty which is all too real for those living in Turkey, a country that does not believe in Jesus as God. We were moved by their service and the pastor's message was not theoretical, it was practical for many in attendance.

There is so much more that could be shared, as we were steeped in Turkish culture and blessed by the experience. We would love to share more if anyone is curious just hit us up. In the meantime, please pray for Ahmet, Joey, Efe, Zachery, Batuhan, Emry, Aziz, Metin, and Mario. Additionally, Grace men have another opportunity to participate in a 4KK retreat this coming up on April, anyone interested can contact, [Rick](#), [Scott](#), or [JD](#) Cunny.

In Christ,

Scott Tidwell and Rick Ralston

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
Nancy Guthrie and her children

Grace Families

Caitlyn and Chris Welch
Paula Betnar
Annette and Mickel Kimbrough
Legacy Mendoza Dreyer and new baby
Donna James
Brenda Hamilton
Vicki Brixey
Jim Wiley
Susie Hill
Jade Lawrence
Allison Butler
Baby Sharp

Grace Friends

Joann Craig's father Bill
Leah Meeh Martin's father-n-law Dale
Shelton Sargent's mother
Father addicted to alcohol