

GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



The Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation
of Grace Presbyterian Church



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“As members of Grace, we are called to be God’s heart, hands, and voice as we engage as servants of Jesus Christ by reaching out to the community beyond our walls to meet human need.”

THE ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE CONGREGATION AND CORPORATION
OF GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sunday, January 26, 2025 • 10 AM

Call to Order – Opening Prayer.....Rev. Dr. Bill Benner, Moderator
Hymn #450 *Be Thou My Vision*.....SLANE

Our Mission Statement (**Unison**)

We are Grace Presbyterian Church, called by our baptism to minister in the name of Jesus Christ;

- ◆ To provide for meaningful worship that reflects the love of God and the genuine character of our faith in Jesus Christ;
- ◆ To be an open and inclusive community of faith, welcoming all regardless of race, orientation or economic status;
- ◆ To provide for the nurture of all God’s people of every age.
- ◆ To be God’s heart, hands and voice as we engage as servants of Jesus Christ by reaching out to the community beyond our walls to meet human need.
- ◆ To discern God’s vision as we grow in faith together as the Body of Christ. Amen.

Opening RemarksRev. Dr. Bill Benner

The Meeting of the Corporation..... Elder Tom Stringfellow

- Call to Order
- Financial Report
- Building Endowment Bylaws change (page 7)
- Close with Prayer

Report of the Nominating Committee (page 20)Elder Tom Stringfellow

Interim Pastor Committee Report Elder Margaret Buchanan

2024 Necrology

Jodean “Jodi” Thomas, Polly Parnell, Marye Barrow Gill, Jim Sanchez

Unison Prayer

Almighty God, Our Creator and Redeemer, you are our strength and our hope. You have given us the joy of knowing these faithful servants, whom we now entrust to your eternal care. Assure us by faith that not even death can separate us from your eternal mercy. Comfort us in our sorrow, that we may know your sure consolation and live in the confident hope of your resurrection; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Hymn #326

For All the Saints

SINE NOMINIE

Adjournment – Closing Prayer Rev. Dr. Bill Benner

GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH—FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Grace Presbyterian Church - Financial Statements

Income, Expense, with Cash Sources and Balances

	Actual for the year ended		Budget
	2024	2023	2025
INCOME			
Pledges	368,120	472,888	380,000
Non Pledge	91,000	51,451	80,000
Other	8,701		12,000
Restricted Income	20,600		22,000
Total Income	488,421	524,339	494,000
EXPENSES			
Mission	40,148	46,495	35,600
Programs	31,806	19,883	32,850
Personnel	355,829	395,460	352,000
Administrative and Other	127,100	124,257	138,150
Total Expenses	554,883	586,095	558,600
Funds from operations (deficit)	(66,462)	(61,756)	(64,600)
CASH SOURCES			
Funds from Yuen operating endowment	40,000	80,000	40,000
Funds from Over and Above			30,000
Committee funds	68,267	22,323	
Net cash generated (consumed)	41,805	40,567	70,000
Beginning cash balance 1/1/2024	101,975	61,408	143,780
Ending operating cash	143,780	101,975	213,780

Statement of Financial Position

	12/31/2024	12/31/2023	Inc (Dec)
ASSETS			
Operating Cash	96,686	39,149	57,537
Restricted Cash	111,015	176,634	(65,619)
Endowment Funds	2,007,983	1,754,403	253,580
Other Current Assets	-	3,694	(3,694)
Land, Buildings, Equipment	1,987,114	1,987,114	(0)
Total Assets	4,202,798	3,960,994	241,804
LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE			
Current Liabilities	2,261	2,830	(569)
Unrestricted Net Assets	2,183,988	2,027,127	156,861
Restricted Net Assets	2,016,549	1,931,037	85,512
TOTAL LIAB AND FUND BAL.	4,202,798	3,960,994	241,804

Endowment Funds

	Building	Mission	Yuen
Beginning Balance 1/1/2024	510,195	913,747	330,461
Withdrawals	-	(45,687)	-
Increase in Market Value	87,063	155,525	56,680
Ending Balance 12/31/2024	597,258	1,023,585	387,140



Grace
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
TEMPLE, TEXAS

Grace Presbyterian Church Building Endowment Fund

Tom Stringfellow, *Chair*

The proposed change in the Building Endowment Fund Bylaws is to allow a distribution of monies based on the performance of the fund over the prior three years. Proposed changes are in **RED**.

All gifts to the Building fund shall be kept separate from all other Church funds.

The principal shall be invested in perpetuity and only the gains in value may be used to carry out the purposes of this fund.

At the discretion of the Session, upon the advice and recommendations of the Finance and Stewardship Committee, acting as the Endowment Committee, may distribute a unitrust amount of from zero to five percent of the fair market value of the fund's assets as determined on December 31st, and averaged over the three years preceding the year of distribution. The Session may choose not to make distributions in any year, if there is no compelling need. Distributed amounts shall be used for building and equipment needs that are beyond the normal budgeted maintenance and operating expenses.

For building additions or where substantial renovation of the physical plant and equipment is required, the Church with approval of three-fourths of the Session may borrow from the Building Endowment Fund. In such case, the Session must approve a repayment schedule and interest rate approximating the terms and rate available from area lending institutions for loans of a similar type and purpose. The loan agreement shall provide for payment of principal and interest not less often than quarterly.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PASTOR

Rev. Thom Lamb III

*I thank my God every time I remember you,
constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you,
because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now.
I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you
will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.
- Philippians 1:3-6*

Paul's words to the little church at Philippi ring true for me as I stand on the edge of the dawning of a new day. I feel the same way Paul did about you. You have been a grace filled faith community, a bold witness to Christ and above all our church family. I am deeply grateful for the past 13 years to have spent it engaged in faithful witness to Christ with an exceptional congregation.

I wanted to take some time to reflect on the past 13 years as I move into the "retirement" phase of my own life.

The Beginnings

I will never forget the first phone call I received from GPC. Beverly Bonnet who was serving on the pastor nominating committee called to see if I was still actively searching for a call. When I told her I was, she said she only had one question for me, "Would you really move to Texas?" I remember saying to Beverly, "If it is a call, then I would probably move to Gaum," to which she replied, "I guess Texas wouldn't be that bad then." That initial conversation has led to 13 years of shared ministry in the name of Jesus, and for that I am deeply grateful.

Those first few years we went through a lot of change. As someone who had been involved in the LOGOS Ministry I was so pleased to hear that GPC had a LOGOS Program. From the beginning until now, LOGOS and our ministry to children and youth is near and dear to my heart. During this time we also refined our order of worship, conducted a mission study, welcomed a new Associate Pastor and made great strides in redefining the mission and ministry of Grace Presbyterian Church. We expanded our mission in the community and did a few Presbyterian Disaster Assistance trips to the gulf. We welcomed a new Mission partner in Paul Both and the South Sudan Education Ministries and welcomed lots of new members. Amid it all, in 2014 My father passed away and in 2015 Lori's father passed as well. You surrounded our family with love and support. At my father's memorial service, after it was all said and done, the pastor of the church told me, "There's a floral arrangement here for you." I looked at the card and it was from Pat and John Wurster. At that point I knew exactly where home was for me, GPC Temple.

During those first few years as a community of faith we also said good bye to a number of faithful saints in the church. It was a time of great sorrow and healing for a lot of us.

The Middle Years

Between 2015 and 2019 personally my family endured a lot of grief. In 2017 my brother passed away and in 2019 my Mom died at the age of 92. During that time you gave me space to grieve and to take care of my family and lifted us in prayer. I will always be deeply grateful for that time and the support you showed to me and my family.

These years also marked a huge transition, as we welcomed members of First Presbyterian Church into the fold. When some folks from FPC reached out to us, we began a conversation as a group of elders and staff from Grace met with the Session and staff of FPC. I will always remember that first meeting. We listened as members of First shared their experiences, their cherished traditions, and their heart-breaking stories. It was a deeply moving time. This set in motion ways to assimilate the members of Frist who were interested in coming over to Grace.

We even saved two places on our Session for two elders from FPC to come into immediate leadership. The evidence of our two churches merging into one are all around us. The stained glass from the sanctuary of FPC now adorns our church library.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PASTOR (*continued*)

The cross wall in the fellowship hall came to us from First. The Baptismal font and the use of the silver communion set remind us that we are now one congregation with two very distinct histories and traditions.

In all my years in ordained ministry no transition has ever gone as smoothly as the merger of our two churches. The people from Grace were warm and welcoming and the people from first jumped right into full membership in the church. We also realized that we had more in common than we thought, especially in terms of our mission and outreach. We shared mission with Meals on Wheels and FPC Brought us Living Waters for the World. This could easily be one of the great highlights of my career.

With a renewed vision for ministry the church as one began to flourish and blossom. A second Mission study was undertaken and new directions for ministry ordained. It was a time of great joy and hopeful possibilities. An Associate Pastor Nominating Committee was formed and we were ready to move forward.

The Pandemic

Just when we had established a new momentum, the pandemic hit and we found ourselves being shut down for the safety of the folks who were most vulnerable and at risk. It was the beginning of a of a time that would bring a whole new set of challenges.

I remember distinctly that I was in New York City doing a wedding for a former student when the news broke that it looked like there was going to be a massive shut down. I returned to Temple on one of the last flights out of New York. We had a rummage sale and found out that the next day we would have to shut down church as we knew it on Palm Sunday. Little did we know that we would spend the next year doing church in a whole new way.

With a talented and creative staff we set about working on church as a video production. We were blessed with a creative staff, Chelsea, Brian, and Eric Vose as we began to produce worship videos. Eric was the heart and soul of editing and making the videos as professional as we could make them. In the meantime, the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee was nearing the end of their search. Eric Peterson was our candidate and we experienced one of hundreds of firsts as we held a congregational meeting over ZOOM.

We continued to produce worship videos, virtual Bible Studies and even a Trunk or Treat Event. We even did parking lot church and did all we could do to try to stay connected. I can tell you that preaching for a camera could easily have been the single weirdest and most frustrating sermons I have ever preached. We soldiered on.

Eventually we reopened on Easter Sunday of 2021, complete with distancing, masks and gallons of hand sanitizer. It quickly became clear that we would not be full back for months to come. Worship attendance was at a new low and over time we gradually began to recapture the joy of worship at GPC. We lost a lot of members over the pandemic and yet we managed to take care of the church and it's staff throughout the pandemic. It has been a long recovery.

Present

We are recovering! As attendance at worship has been on a steady up swing during this past year. I believe that it is due in large part to the hospitality practiced by so many in our congregation. This welcoming spirit exemplifies the very presence of Christ in our midst.

One great push has been the "Men's Breakfast." With Stan Simons and Bob Shull at the helm the men's breakfast has been a constant place of fellowship over the past year. The men of the church have taken turns sharing their personal journey's, helping us to get to know each other better. It is a faithful group, and the breakfasts are pretty good too!

I owe a great deal to the time I have spent with the Presbyterian Women. Whether leading a Bible study or sitting in at their board meetings, the PW group continues to provide consistent fellowship and nurture for the women of the church. The Backpack Buddies program and the ways in which they have contributed to the ministry of the church with gifts for the LOGOS program, meals on wheels and more, exemplify their commitment to mission and ministry of the church.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PASTOR (*continued*)

A highlight for me this year was teaching the confirmation class. The five youth took on the challenge of listening for God's call in their lives. It was a joy sharing the teaching duties with John Mark Gary and Beth Gerdes. The confirmands took on a project to raise money for Holiday Meals for the clients of CTLC. With a goal of 100 meals at \$40.00 each they youth surpassed that goal raising over \$4400.00. Their exploration in faith has left me humbled. I am grateful for Annie, Cassie, Andy, Dawson and Lu-Lu and the gifts they will continue to share as members of GPC.

You can be grateful as I am for the work of your Session. This has been a challenging year, especially since I announced my retirement. They have truly stepped up and led us through the beginnings of transition. The Nominating Committee has done good work finding folks to serve as officers of the church during a time of uncertainty. It is a testament to the faithfulness of the leadership.

The transition time depends heavily on a staff that can work together as a team. We are grateful for such a staff at GPC. Chelsea Stern faithfully directs our music ministry. Her leadership is second to none as she brings out the best in those she works with. A gifted musician with a passionate faith her gifts resonate across the ministries she leads. We are truly blessed with a talented group of musicians. Emily and Jonathan Gary who provide for accompaniment to our excellent choir as well as sharing their gifts with the praise team. Josh Essary continues to serve as our Bell Choir director, providing a place for more to step up and lead in worship. They are pretty darn good too!

The support staff is grounded by our office manager, Sharon (Ellis) Kristoferson. Sharon ticks all the boxes as she brings an element of joy to the church office. Her position encompasses that of a receptionist, bookkeeper, graphic designer, and social media. Her 'can-do' attitude has helped to support many of the ministries of the church. Adele Parker, our custodian takes great pride in keeping our facility running and clean. Adele often goes over and above her job description to support the ministries of the church, almost always behind the scenes. We are blessed with a gifted nursery staff, headed by Jane Nance who has devoted over 30 years to the care of our little ones. We welcomed Katherine Krska, as our new accounting manager. After 15 years with Kirk Fischer as our accounting manager, Katherine has stepped in to take on the day to day duties. She is a delightful presence and is quickly learning the system at GPC. We are blessed with a staff whose faith resonates throughout the mission and ministries of the church.

In conclusion, I am grateful for the past 13 years as we have journeyed together. You will forever be in my hearts as a congregation that truly reflects the name we share, Grace. May God's love continue to be your guide as you move into 2025 and beyond. I am confident that the witness to Jesus Christ will continue as you grow in faith in the years to come. I leave you with the lyrics to a song by Dougie MacLean:

Until we meet again, I wish you well.
I hope your light shines easily.
Until we meet again, it doesn't matter how we've done
On the atoll side, I'll see you farther on.

May the love that God has given you continue to be your guide. May the grace of Christ lead you in reconciliation and hope, and may the Spirit of the living God continue to be your guide as you live out your call to serve.

Grace and Peace!

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Chelsea Stern, *Minister of Music*

Grace Presbyterian Church Music Ministry is a vibrant and faithful ministry. Choir and Bell Choir members, Praise Team players and singers and LOGOS Children's Choir all faithfully and eagerly lead us in worship with joy and commitment. The gifts of Josh Essary, *Handbell Ensemble Director*, Emily Gary, *Pianist and Accompanist* and Dr. Jonathan Gary, *Organist*, bless our community. This past year, God brought new members to our various groups and with them new energy! Let us look back on all the wonderful special musical events of 2024:

- **March**
 - ⇒ LOGOS Children's Choir sings and leads in worship for Palm Sunday
 - ⇒ Chancel Choir and Handbell Choir provides meaningful and special music all throughout Holy Week including Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday
- **June**
 - ⇒ Chancel Choir sing through June with a special "summer choir". Several visitors joined us in singing, including youth.
- **July 21**
 - ⇒ Chancel Choir provides several special pieces for the *Feed My Sheep* "Christmas in July Fundraiser"
- **September 29**
 - ⇒ Gospel Music Sunday – Chancel Choir was joined by the talented local soloist and gospel singer, Angel Tolbert. The Praise Team offered special gospel music in worship
- **November 10**
 - ⇒ The 100-voice Baylor Men's Choir gave a 4PM concert on their Fall tour at Grace. It was a spectacular concert. We had a full sanctuary, welcoming many folks from the community. Thanks especially to the GPC choir for hosting these students and feeding them!
- **December and Advent**
 - ⇒ Dec. 1 – The LOGOS Children's Choir led several songs and offered an anthem in worship for Advent. They also read the Advent Candle lighting liturgy.
 - ⇒ Dec. 8 – The Chancel Choir presented: "*Messiah: a Cantata*" by Handel and arr. by Hal Hopson in worship. They were joined by a wonderful chamber orchestra and several guests and soloists in the choir.
 - ⇒ Dec. 15 – The GPC Handbell Ensemble played three beautiful pieces in worship for the 3rd Sunday in Advent.

In worship we express our gratitude and praise for all God has done for us in our lives. Music Ministry, for me, is always first, MINISTRY. Ministry happens through the coming together in community to make beautiful music together. I am grateful that at GPC we have so many wonderful musicians willing to share their talents for the Glory of God. May our Music Ministry continue to glorify God, care for God's children and be a community that reflects God's abundant grace and love.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CLERK OF SESSIONAnn Edmondson, *Clerk of Session*

The Grace Presbyterian Session prayerfully met monthly for 12 meetings during 2024 (Jan 21; Feb 20; Mar 19; Apr 16; May 21; Jun 18; Jul 16; Aug 20; Sep 17; Oct 15; Nov 19; Dec 17). The Annual Congregational Meeting was held in January (Jan 28) and two Called Congregational Meetings (Aug 18; Sept) were held for specific business purposes. The following statistical information about our membership is recorded:

New Members:

John Burns	8.18.24	Andrew Essary	11.17.24
Mei Burns	8.18.24	Dawson McCauley	11.17.24
Elizabeth Burns	11.17.24	Annelise Nickerson	11.17.24
		Cassandra Nickerson	11.17.24

Baptisms:

Grayson Ray Stephens 12.8.24

Necrology Report (Deaths):

Jodean "Jodi" Thomas	5.29.24
Polly Parnell	7.8.24
Marye Barrow Gill	7.17.24
Jim Sanchez	12.24.24

Births: None to report**Marriages:** None to report**Confirmations:** 5 (Elizabeth Burns, Andrew Essary, Dawson McCauley, Annelise Nickerson, Cassandra Nickerson)**GPC Membership Summary for 2024**

Active Membership 1.1.24	271
Gains: By Letter of Transfer	2 (John Burns, Mei Burns)
By Affirmation of Faith & Baptism	5
By Reaffirmation of Faith	0
Baptism	0
Losses: Deaths	4 (members: Jodean "Jodi" Thomas, Polly Parnell, Marye Barrow Gill, Jim Sanchez)
Transferred Out of Membership	2 (Janice Smith 1.21.24; John Mackrell 9.26.24)
Requests to be removed	0
Active Membership – 12.31.24	272

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

John Bowling, *chair*

The Mission of the Personnel Committee is to provide for the administration of the program of the church, including employment of non-ordained staff, with concern for equal employment opportunity, fair employment practices, personnel policies and the annual review of compensation for all staff members.

Committee members include John Bowling, Liz Callarman, Beth Gerdes, David Nickerson, and Sara Shull.

After years of wonderful service in all financial matters Kirk Fischer retired. We have hired Katherine Krska as Accounting Manager/Financial Advisor and she's doing a great job. This summer we were blessed with Colton Hedrick as Seminary Intern. We've said farewell to Pastor Thom Lamb. Chelsea Stern continues as our Minister of Music along with our other Musicians: Emily Gary, Jonathan Gary, and Josh Essary.

Sharon Kristoferson is our Office Administrator and has a very important role in maintaining continuity in this time of transition. Jane Nance is our Child Care Coordinator along with our wonderful nursery staff of Lynn Grant, Tempy Brown, and Kimberly Allen. Adele Parker continues her excellent ministry as Sexton. Murray McCarley, Josh Essary, and Andy Essary are our Projectionists/Sound Technicians not as staff, but as dedicated volunteers. *(They would welcome another volunteer to learn the system.)* We are currently in the process of hiring a Director of Christian Education. Annual performance reviews of staff were conducted. A 3% cost of living salary increase for 2025 is budgeted for all staff.

THE BOARD OF DEACONS

Lynn Grant, *Deacons Moderator*

Lynn Grant served as Moderator in 2024. Kenny Lange served as Vice Moderator and Secretary writing and submitting monthly meeting minutes. Norman and Rebecca Northen served as Communion Coordinators, making sure all communion supplies (*bread/crackers, grape juice, communion cups*) were available. Sara Shull and Linda Lowe served as Bereavement Reception Coordinators, planning food and set up/clean up for bereavement receptions. Al Lowe wrote bereavement letters to next of kin on the anniversary of church member deaths, as well as writing letters to new babies in our church family when requested by the family. Bob Shull led our homebound visitation and reported to the Deacons regarding homebound members.

DEACON RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIVITIES:

- The Board of Deacons met monthly on the second Tuesday evening of each month except for a month off in July 2024.
- The Board of Deacons all participated in preparing monthly communion according to a schedule signed up for at monthly Deacon meetings.
- The Board of Deacons all participated in serving homebound communion along with GPC Elders according to a schedule distributed by the church office at the beginning of the year.
- Each Deacon was assigned a short list of church members to pray for in 2024 and sent cards/letters to these church members with the Deacon's contact information.
- The Deacons hosted 3 bereavement receptions in 2024 including organizing food and beverages, set up and clean up of Fellowship Hall and a family room in the church library.
- The Deacons organized, set up and cleaned up the Easter Brunch on Easter Sunday (3/31/24).
- The Deacons helped set up and clean up the retirement BBQ for Thom and Lori Lamb on November 16, 2024.
- The Shull's hosted a Deacon fellowship potluck at their home in October 2024.
- During our monthly meetings, the Deacons were led by Rev. Thom Lamb in a study of *In the Name of Jesus* by Henri J.M. Nouwen. Rev. Lamb also kept the Deacons updated regarding the transition at Grace Presbyterian Church as he was to retire.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Joshua Essary, *chair*

The mission of the Christian Education Committee of Grace Presbyterian Church the Nurture of Children and Youth: Offering guidance, spiritual care, and opportunities for growth to our youngest members, ensuring they feel valued as vital participants in the life of the church. (*Updated for 2025*)

Members of the CE committee for 2024 were: Josh Essary, A'Lisa Ozment, Ann Edmondson, Sarah Nickerson, Janet Kowalkowski, Beth Gerdes, Debbie Stephens, and Rev. Thom Lamb

Sunday Schools

Sunday School classes continue to provide support and education for members and visitors of all ages. The nursery is well-staffed and enjoys the regular attendance of many children.

GPC now has three adult Sunday School classes, but also invites a multigenerational audience to all learning experiences.

Rev. Thom Lamb led a Confirmation Class that successfully confirmed five youth. Following their confirmation, the class transitioned into a Sunday School class, continuing their faith formation journey.

Programs

Our VBS program, "*Renew: Grow in Faith, Have Fun, Change the World,*" helped us connect with families, children, and volunteers, encouraging them to participate in CE ventures and programs.

LOGOS continues to thrive with strong attendance and the dedication of amazing volunteers. Their tireless work in organizing food, activities, music, curriculum, and more makes LOGOS a rewarding experience for both children and adults. The LOGOS children shared their musical talents by singing during several worship services.

The youth group now meets concurrently with LOGOS, which continues to positively impact attendance. Currently, the youth are actively assisting with LOGOS activities. Plans for this semester include dedicated learning opportunities and youth-focused activities.

First Sunday Fellowship for families continues to be well attended. We are delighted that church members without young children have also begun to participate, further strengthening our sense of community.

2025 Goals

Grow Sunday School attendance, increase Youth engagement in and outside of the Sunday School hour, provide more curricular support for adult and youth Sunday School classes to foster an already cohesive instructional team.



MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Marianne Stringfellow and Kevin Cushman, *co-chairs*

Your membership committee is comprised of nine (9) eager and energized members who have coined the phrase we are GPC's "*Membership in Motion*" Team and full of ideas that we are bringing into "motion".

Our "Extra Love Member of the Month" is a program our shut-ins have enjoyed. They have found comfort from receiving greeting cards and phone calls from fellow GPC Members. We will continue that program.

The Virtual Membership Directory remains a work in progress. Marianne thinks it still needs a printed backup for our membership. A new one is a hope for the month of February/March 2025. We also helped Host New Member Conversations and will continue with those as called by the Pastor.

We gift a loaf of bread to visitors we can find! They do not always give us an address. We aim to introduce ourselves to visitors in Sunday services and urge all church members to do the same. Friendliness is a prime reason visitors return!

You have surely noticed the bulletin board notices with colorful announcements about upcoming events. These are produced by Cindy Bankston, Maren Palmer and Sharon Kristoferson.

Your Membership in Motion Committee have hosted multiple group visits to the Temple Civic Theater this year. This year's performance of "Grapes of Wrath" in April featured three GPC musicians: Joey Tabarlet, Stan Simons and Bill Stanley! And you do know that our own Natasha Tolleson is the director of it all! We pair it with TCT's Opening Night, *Deadfish Grill* appetizers, and our committee contributes beverages. This program is one to continue.

Our committee composed a letter explaining what we are working to accomplish and mailed it out inviting ALL to attend our 1st Homecoming Picnic in May which was held at the GPC Pavilion.

This Old Fashioned Picnic featured chicken tenders and drinks provided by the Membership Committee, while folks brought their favorite side dishes. We had over 100 folks come and fellowship that day. These will be a quarterly *Dinner with Friends* program.

Our committee helped organize the Mo Ranch Family Memorial Weekend for the first time.

October 27 membership hosted a 2nd Picnic at the Pavilion with BBQ, Brats, Hot dogs and Drinks with music by the *Setting Sons*. Again, very well attended.

November 26 was a Thanksgiving Dinner jointly hosted by Membership and GPC Deacons.

Have you noticed that we seem to finally be over the slow down brought by Covid? We are having good numbers of worshipers on Sunday morning. The fellowship is beautiful!

What's Next??? Watch your monthly newsletters, as Membership in Motion has many more ideas for 2025! Stay tuned!

MISSION AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Sarah Nickerson, *chair*

The Mission of the Mission and Outreach Committee is:

- 1) *To maintain and expand current mission programs, promoting stewardship of our mission and endowment funds for local, national, and international missions and ministries;*
- 2) *To communicate more often and effectively the activities of the mission programs at GPC to members to increase awareness and promote and encourage volunteers;*
- 3) *To continue to seek, explore and engage in new mission opportunities*

Committee Members: Sarah Nickerson, *chair*; Andrine Kagu, Sandy Mason, Becky Northen, Normal Northen, Ed Seeger, Elizabeth Seeger, Peg Spangler, Debbie Trahan, and Rev. Thom Lamb (staff resource).

Existing mission outreach partners and programs were supported through both Endowment funds and the General Mission Budget.

◆ **General Mission Budget**

- Grace Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly - \$10,800.00
- Mission expense - \$500.00
- Mission grants – \$10,320.00
- Special Needs – \$3,000.00
- Feed My Sheep - \$3,600.00
- Meals on Wheels - \$9000.00

Total Mission Budget - \$37,220.00

◆ **Mission Grants**

The \$10,320.00 in mission grants was disbursed as follows:

- Churches Touching Lives for Christ (CTLC) - \$1,680.00
- Families in Crisis, Inc.—\$1,680.00
- PCHAS—\$1,800.00
- MOW, Temple Senior Services—\$1,680.00
- Feed My Sheep — \$1,800.00
- Temple Free Clinic —\$504.00

Mission Endowment Fund: The committee received \$45,000 from the Mission Endowment fund and recommended to Session that the following donations be made from the Endowment funds in 2024. All were approved by Session.

◆ **Mission Endowment Funds**

- Paul Both, missionary to South Sudan - \$7,500
- Mizpah Ministries, Kenya - \$10,000
- Body of Christ Dental Clinic - \$5,000
- Presbyterian Pan American School - \$5,000
- PCHAS Therapeutic Mentoring - \$4,100
- Our Hospice House - \$5,000
- PDA - Hurricane Helene Relief of \$5,000
- Confirmation class, CTLC Fall Campaign Holiday Meals of \$2,000
- Camp Gilmont - \$1,400.00

◆ Hands-on Missions:

In addition to financial support, the members and friends of Grace Presbyterian Church contributed countless gifts of time and talent to missions, including:

- Meals on Wheels -prepared and delivered meals to about 20 people weekly
- Feed My Sheep -prepared and served hot meals and sack lunches quarterly
- Carter Blood Care blood drive - collected 20 units of blood and 2 units of RBC
- PCHAS Angel Tree- provided Christmas gifts for children receiving services through PCHAS.
- Living Waters for the World- to support new and existing LWW systems in Guatemala through memorials and donations. GPC has partnered with *Westminster Church* in Arlington, Texas, to continue with water installations throughout Guatemala. GPC has partnered with *Westminster Church* in Arlington, Texas, to continue with water installations throughout Guatemala. Preparations are underway for planning the next installation
- Rummage Sale was held September 7, 2024; profits of \$2136.20 benefiting LWW. LWW Restricted fund YTD balance is \$20,908.90

Our mission to communicate more regularly with the congregation and increase awareness of mission activities was accomplished through regular articles in Grace Notes, the weekly Messenger email, and Moments for Mission opportunities in worship.

'As members of Grace, we are called to be God's heart, hands, and voice as we engage as servants of Jesus Christ by reaching out to the community beyond our walls to meet human need.'



NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The 2024 Nominating Committee respectfully places in nomination the following persons for the office of Elder:

For the class of 2027:

John Burns
Margie McLoud
Patti Smith
Bill Stokes

The 2024 Nominating Committee respectfully places in nomination the following persons for the office of DEACON:

For the class of 2027:

Lee Ann Bettis
Joey Tabarlet
Martha Tabarlet
Debbie Trahan

The 2024 Nominating Committee respectfully places in nomination the following persons to serve on the Nominating Committee as members at large for 2025:

Jo Elwood
Robby Ozment
Cathi Simons
Carla Stanley

The Nominating Committee for 2024 is:

Tom Stringfellow (*Chair, Session*)
Jo Elwood (*At Large*)
Beth Gerdes (*At Large*)
Robby Ozment (*At Large*)
Bob Shull (*At Large*)

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Robby Ozment, *Chair*

The mission of the property committee is to be caretakers of the church facility inside and out. We focus on the physical means of worship and work of Grace Presbyterian Church, so that our members and visitors experience a safe and comfortable place to worship, learn, and have fellowship with their family and friends.

The members of the property committee for 2024 were Robby Ozment, Jan Fall, Stan Simons, Josh Essary, Adele Parker.

Our property committee focuses on four areas: safety and security, facility maintenance, facility financial management, and special projects. Normally, our team has different areas of responsibility.

Tentative committee “responsibilities” have been:

Committee member resignation – kitchen
 Josh Essary/Jimmy Morgette - technology and all that goes with it
 Dan Stephens – special projects
 Stan Simons – grounds/AC
 Jan Fall – coordinating efforts

Safety and security: After the intensity of developing a stage by stage opening policy in 2021 based on metrics, where we taped off certain pews and areas of seating to assure that 6’ distance could/would be observed.

Maintenance:

- The church had a lot of tree damage in
- On August 3, 2024, repairs were performed of storm damage to the roof of the sanctuary. The cost was \$575 and taken from the over and above account.
- In June, 2024, \$5200 was spent on tree removal after storms that included a tornado in West Temple.
- During the year several parking lot spotlights were repaired by Oncor.
- Session approved the purchase of a package of technology improvements including: ProPresenter, digital mixer software, confidence monitor, lighting upgrade new cabling, and a new musical keyboard.
- In November a repair was made to the membrane roof over the sanctuary.

*For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.
 Matthew 8:20*

MEALS ON WHEELS

Thom Lamb, *chair*; Peg Spangler, *co-chair*

The Mission of the Grace Presbyterian Meals on Wheels program is to provide nutritious meals to the elderly, disabled and homebound.

The recipients of Meals on Wheels receive a hot meal along with a bag of cool/cold items that we refer to a “Cold Pack”, each Tuesday.

The hot meal provides approximately 6-8 ounces of protein, two (2) cups of vegetables and two (2) cups of rice, pasta or potatoes. Combined it should provide enough for two (2) meals. In the event we cook too much, we create casseroles to freeze for their cold packs.

The cold pack contains bread, two (2) cartons of either milk or juice (when milk is not available), two (2) servings of fruit (canned or fresh), a salad, two (2) desserts and a two (2) serving size frozen casserole. During the winter months, we provide homemade soup and cornbread.

Our volunteer status has changed. I have received an email from Grace volunteers, Kim and Mark Gaddy, that they would like to cover the third Tuesday as cooks. They will be coming in on January 14 to start learning. I was also notified by another member that he is available anytime as a cook. That will give us cooks to cover every Tuesday and a sub cook to cover absences.

I would still like to get four (4) more cold packers, one (1) each for the second (2nd), third (3rd), fourth (4th) and fifth (5th) Tuesdays. Currently we only have one (1) cold packer for each of those days.

There are three (3) of us who show up every Tuesday just to be sure that there are no problems. Our volunteers consist of 10 cooks, two (2) for each Tuesday, two (2) salad makers, three (3) soup makers, three (3) frozen casserole makers, 2 cornbread makers, three (3) cake and cookie makers, three (3) rotating milk delivery teams and four (4) drivers who deliver the meals to our recipients. To my knowledge, most of our volunteers do not request reimbursement for the supplies that they use. However, they are allowed to use the food containers, i.e. ziploc bags, styrofoam containers, etc. for their donations.

Shoppers for food have been Peg Spangler, Mike Milbery, Dawn Pechal and June Cushman.

We received food donations from various public and private sectors. These donations are examined, accepted, stored and used efficiently for the preparation of MOW meals. Birthday and holiday cards are handmade by Beth Gerdes and distributed during the year with the meals. Our volunteers are committed to the program, especially our drivers who develop a close relationship with the people who they deliver to.

Our recipient number has varied anywhere between 19 and 23 throughout the year. Currently we have 20 and could serve up to 25.

We try to save on groceries wherever we can as inflation seems to be hanging on. I hadn't been given a new budget for this year as I was told to proceed in 2025 staying within our \$9,000.00 annual budget.

We continue with hope of increasing our recipients by reaching out to our friends, family and neighbors for help in achieving this task.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Cindy Bankston, *moderator*

Mission Statement: Nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study, support the mission of the church, work for justice and peace, build an inclusive and caring community of women that strengthens the PCUSA, and witness to the promise of God's kingdom.

Board Members:

Moderator *Cynthia Bankston*; **Secretary-Treasurer** *Julie Benner*; **Search Chair and Member at Large** *Marianne Stringfellow*; **Circle Chair** *Patricia Wurster*; **Circle Chair** *Julie Benner*; **Circle Chair** *Patricia Smith*.

◆ **Circle Attendance:**

Tuesday Morning Circle 10-12 members

Tuesday Evening Circle 2-4 members

Jennie Shull Circle 10-18 members

◆ **Annual, All Circle Events:**

1. **Annual Fundraiser: Backpack Buddies** held April-June, 2024

- Goal: to provide 80 backpacks for local students in need, to be filled with supplies for the 2024-25 school year, at a cost of \$40 per backpack.
- Due to excellent purchasing strategies by Susan Phelps, we were once again able to avoid price increases for the backpacks.
- Thanks to the generosity of the congregation and staff of GPC, we exceeded expectations, collecting a total of \$4,010. After purchasing the backpacks and supplies at a cost of \$3,200, we retained an excess of \$810, which is currently held in a line account for the purpose of providing additional backpacks and supplies in the 2025-26 school year.

2. **Bible Study Kickoff Celebration:**

- September 16, 2024; Study Title: *Why Presbyterians Are Like That*, written by Rev. John Williams with light refreshments. Lessons one and two presented by Rev. Thom Lamb

3. **Christmas Celebration:**

- December 8, 2024; Light refreshments and holiday fellowship: Music and Program: "Moments of Gratitude," presented by Rev. Thom Lamb

4. **Benevolent Giving:** A total of \$4k, as follows:

- \$3,000 to GPC, to be used for purchasing new sound system for the sanctuary
- \$500 to Meals on Wheels
- \$500 to LOGOS

The Board of Directors for GPC's Presbyterian Women, are beyond grateful for the support we continue to receive from our sisters in faith, the GPC staff, and one another as we continue our journey of faith together.

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE

Tom Stringfellow, *Chair*

The Mission of the Stewardship and Finance Committee is to continue providing oversight and support for the financial goals and aspirations of Grace Presbyterian Church.

The 2024 Committee is made from members Tom Stringfellow, *chairman*; Mike Milbery, Bill Stokes, Mike Jordan and Kevin Cushman. The long-serving GPC Accounting Manager Kirk Fischer has retired, and we have welcomed Katherine Krska to Grace as our Financial Administrator. Katherine works closely with the Finance Committee and serves as the primary liaison with GPC Office Administrator, Sharon Kristoferson.

The Committee provides oversight of the Annual GPC budget process, including making any necessary changes as may be required during the year, reviewing financial performance by monitoring progress throughout the year toward meeting our financial goals. Committee also reviews the management of our GPC Endowment Funds by Texas Presbyterian Fund (TPF), and executing the sale of any GPC/Presbytery owned property. The Committee also manages insurance coverage and works with the Session and Moderator on the annual Stewardship campaign.

The Chair makes reports to the Session at each meeting, reviewing the current status of estimated revenues and expenditures. The Chair is also responsible for the collections and counting of each weeks offerings and gifts to the Church, working with the Financial Administrator to ensure all funds are timely and accurately reported and deposited.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Margaret Buchanan, *chair*

The mission of the Worship Committee is to plan and facilitate all aspects of worship to ensure reverent and meaningful services for the Congregation and visitors. We work closely with Clergy, Music Staff, the Board of Deacons and Adele Parker, our Sexton.

Members of committee: Rev. Thom Lamb, Margaret Buchanan, Richard Tolleson and Chelsea Stern.

It requires the coordination of many people to plan and facilitate worship. We are grateful to all who help provide our Worship services.

- Our pastor, Rev. Thom Lamb, who has planned and provided us with engaging and meaningful services each week according to the Church year.
- Chelsea Stern, for planning and leading our music appropriate to the theme of each service. We acknowledge all those who help Chelsea - Jonathan and Emily Gary, Josh Essary, the choir, praise band members, soloists, instrumental musicians, and our children's choir. We thank God for the many talented people who provide us with an outstanding music ministry.
- Thanks to Josh Essary and his team operating our sound and video system. This adds to our services in the church and also makes possible our online worship.
- Our liturgists, who volunteer to assist our pastor in leading us in Worship.
- We have a loyal group of people who take one Sunday each month to take care of the Ushers duties. And we have so many members who step in to help with the Ushering on Sundays and any other special services.
- Thanks to the Elders and Deacons who prepare and serve Communion.
- Doug and Ann Edmondson take care of our banners and paraments, hanging them and keeping them appropriate to the liturgical calendar.
- Thanks to Norman Northen and those who have helped provide flowers and arrangements for the Sanctuary.
- Thanks to all the children who have helped lead our Worship this year and those who have brought us joy as they attend the Children's Sermon. Of course, we thank all the adults who have provided the children's sermons, especially Mr. Moose.
- We acknowledge all the effort Adele Parker puts into providing a clean and proper setting for each and every service.
- And we are grateful for such a wonderful congregation who participate in Worship and help make our visitors feel welcome.

The Worship Committee is currently preparing for the next year when the Church is in transition. We will be hiring pulpit supply, lining up liturgists, and working with our music leaders to continue providing worship at Grace. We look forward to working with the interim pastor and eventually our next full-time pastor.

We pray for Grace as God moves us into our future.

