

# THE GRACEVINE

Grace Presbyterian Church  
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**MARCH 2021**  
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## **Seeing the Back of God** *Exodus 33:18-23*

Have you ever seen God's back? You may have, and just didn't recognize it!

In the text, Moses asks God for the privilege of seeing God's face; but God denies Moses that privilege, offering instead to allow Moses to see God's back. Moses is with God up on Mt. Sinai (Horeb), and in the course of conversation between them, Moses had asked for God's assurance that as he and the Israelites begin their trek away from the mountain further into the wilderness, God will indeed be with them. Moses doesn't want to budge from that spot without this reassurance from God. God grants Moses the assurance Moses seeks, seemingly because God says they are now on a first name basis. God arranges to place Moses in a special place—"a large crack in the rock"—and cover Moses with God's hand while God passes by and speaks God's name; then God will remove God's hand, and Moses may see God's back as God moves away from Moses.

An interesting implication of this whole episode is that to see God's face we have to be in front of God. On a different level of discourse, we do not routinely see ourselves as being in front of God. In fact, we believe that God is always in the lead, and in every godly effort, God takes the initiative, going before us. We believe that there is nowhere we can go in this life, in any sense, where God has not already been.

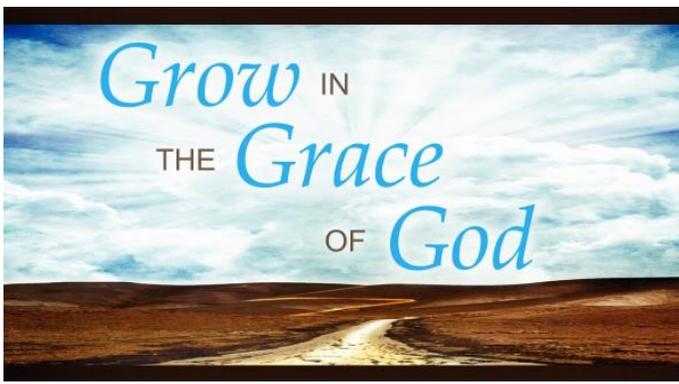
We believe one of the main reasons Jesus came among us was to go through every important human experience, in order to demonstrate God's love for us. That is, no human experience is beneath God, or is something God cannot or would not endure, as we do. We believe God always takes the lead and goes before us throughout our lives. This is illustrated in the words of the familiar hymn, "Lead on, O King Eternal."

It naturally follows, then, that if God is in the lead, we will see only God's back in this life. We are promised that in the life to come we will be allowed—nay, required—to stand before God (and Christ) on God's throne, which will place us in a face-to-face position. This sight is sometimes referred to as the "beatific vision."

Until then, we follow God through this life, seeking to serve God in the fellowship and ministry of other believers. I suppose whether or not we get to see God's "back" depends on how closely we follow God in this process. If we don't follow God closely enough, we may not even catch a glimpse of God.

As we walk from day to day, the closest we can come to seeing God's face, is to see God in the faces of our fellow humans along the way. That, too, is a blessing, and is a gift if we can accomplish it. Every time we catch a glimpse of God in another person's face we should give thanks for the gift of a preview of the "beatific vision" for which all those who love God long in this life.

--Rev. Pat



## Worship Schedule

**10:30 a.m. Worship**

## Church Office Hours

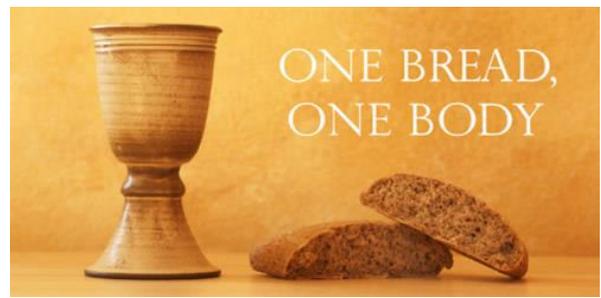
**M-Thur. 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

**Fri. 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

*A Nursery is available every Sunday during Worship in Room 4.*

## COVID-19 Mitigation Measures

We remind you that the increasing distribution of COVID vaccines does NOT change in any way the restrictions we are following to limit the spread of the virus! We will continue to require masks and social distancing on church premises, as before. This is required by the proliferation of new virus strains, which are reported to be more contagious and/or lethal. We also remind you that we practice these measures **at least** as much for the sake of each other as for ourselves. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation!



**COMMUNION** - will be celebrated during worship on **Sunday, March 7th**. As usual, we invite those who watch our worship stream to gather your communion elements ahead of time so you can take communion with us.



The Presbyterian Women encourage the congregation to support **United Christian Outreach** by bringing non-perishable canned goods and paper products on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month.

**Our next collection will be on Sunday, March 7th**. Please consider donating to this mission of Grace Presbyterian Church.

**Thank you to everyone who made donations to the Souper Bowl of Caring on Sunday, February 7th. We were able to deliver “lots” of food items to United Christian Outreach and we also provided UCO with a check for \$131 to be used to help with food needs. Thank you to everyone for making this mission a successful one!!!**



sharing resources. changing lives.

On **Easter morning, April 4th**, we will have our One Great Hour of Sharing Offering. The Presbyterian Church invites you to follow God's call and take action to help those who are hungry, thirsty, without shelter or a safe place to call home. From people living in your community to those around the world, your gifts have a global reach, providing food and water, relief from the effects of crises and catastrophic events, and assistance for those stricken by oppression. This is a great cause to donate to. **Make checks payable to GRACE.** [www.presbyterianmission.org/give-oghs](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/give-oghs)



**Easter Lilies** will be available for purchase in memory/honor of a loved one on **Sunday, March 7th, 14th & 21st after worship** – a table will be available in the narthex.

The cost for a Lily is \$15.00/each. Easter is on April 4th this year!

If you would like to purchase a Lily but are not attending in-person worship, please contact Sarah in the church office to place your order (*and a check can be mailed to the church*). Lilies can be brought home after our Easter service at 10:30am on Sunday, April 4th.



## **HOLY WEEK SERVICES:**

**Palm Sunday, March 28**

Worship Service: **10:30 a.m.**

**Maundy Thursday, April 1**

Time TBA

(Normally held at Grace Presbyterian)

**Good Friday, April 2**

Time TBA

(Normally held at First Presbyterian)

**Sunday, April 4**

Worship Service, **10:30 a.m.**

At Grace Presbyterian Church

**\*\*We will update everyone on times & locations once Holy Week Services are officially scheduled!**

**One Great Hour of Sharing special Easter offering: Hunger program and disaster relief and self-development of people**



Don't forget to set your clocks forward 1-hour before you go to sleep on **Saturday, March 13th.**



## 2021 Phone Directory

Our 2021 phone directories have been printed and are ready for pickup. There is a table set up outside the Sanctuary for you to grab a copy on Sunday Mornings. Several family's information changed since last year and several new families have been added to our directory so make sure to grab an updated directory!

If you are not attending in-person worship or are homebound and would like us to mail you a directory, please contact the church office at (337) 984-6400 or email us at [gracpreb@lusfiber.net](mailto:gracpreb@lusfiber.net).



### MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Bill Grubb**
- 10 Donna Causey**
- 15 Bob Hess**
- 27 Betty Adams**
- 29 Lilith Hoover**

If we do not have your birthday on our list, please let us know and make sure all your family members are included. Birthdays can be emailed to [gracpreb@lusfiber.net](mailto:gracpreb@lusfiber.net) or you can call the office at (337) 984-6400.



**GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME** our newest members who have joined Grace Presbyterian Church.

**Linda Griffis** has transferred her membership from First Presbyterian and **Joe & Glenda Hunter** have restored their membership at Grace Presbyterian.

## MOTHER'S DAY OUT



**MDO REGISTRATION** – Grace Mother's Day Out is still accepting registrations for our upcoming Summer 2021 and Fall 2021-2022 Semesters. Spots were offered to our current families first, but are now open to any new families that would like to join the program. If you would like more information, please email [mdoatgrace@gmail.com](mailto:mdoatgrace@gmail.com) or call MDO at (337) 993-1231.

## Committee Meetings

**SESSION** – our next meeting will be on **Tuesday, March 23rd at 6pm**. Please let Lynne Castle know if you cannot attend this meeting.

# March

10:30 am - Worship	6:30pm - Al-anon	9am-2pm MDO	9am-2pm MDO 9am - UL Writing Class 6pm - Co-Dependence	9am-2pm MDO 5-6:45pm - AA	1:30pm - Al-anon	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 <i>Communion</i>  <i>UCO Collection</i>  <i>Easter Lily Sales</i>	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 <i>Easter Lily Sales</i>  <i>Daylight Savings</i>	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 <i>Easter Lily Sales</i>	22	23 <i>Session Meeting 6pm</i>	24	25	26	27
28 <i>Palm Sunday</i>	29	30	31	1  <i>Maundy Thursday Service (TBA)</i>	2  <i>Good Friday Service (TBA)</i>	3

## **GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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