



# SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER





## Reflection from Pastor John Denton

This Sunday we had 11 guests! I love hearing that! These are the kinds of messages I live for—people are visiting Grace Presbyterian Church. That means a few things:

We are visible—people know we exist.

We are inviting—people are being welcomed in.

This year I've been laser-focused not only on meeting our 5% growth goal, but on breaking the 100-person barrier for in-person worship. Why? Because reaching 100 puts us in the top 25% of churches in the United States. It means we're maximizing our facility, preparing to grow our staff, and managing the costs of ministry wisely.

But let me be clear—this isn't about becoming a "mega

church." It's about stewardship. It's about taking care of the resources God has given us so they can be used for His glory.



So why am I so passionate about this? Because people need Jesus. As disciples of Jesus, we are called to make disciples. That's multiplication—taking what Jesus is doing in us and allowing it to multiply in others. We're not just trying to keep the lights on—we're following Jesus. And here's the good news: when we follow Him, the lights don't just stay on—they burn brightly. The campus doesn't just get used—it becomes a place where God's glory is made visible.

When I first came to Grace in 2022, my daughter's teacher asked me about the church I pastored. When I told her it was Grace, she said, "Oh, I thought that church closed down." From that moment on, one of my goals has been to make sure people driving by our campus know without a doubt—we are alive, open, praying for them, and ready to welcome them in.

That's why building a culture of invitation matters. Yes, some people might stop by on their own. But our mandate is to make disciples, and that means inviting, welcoming, and helping people grow in their faith at Grace.

On September 7<sup>th</sup> we celebrate our Fall Kickoff; Rally Day! Let's rally together to break 100 in worship that day, and step into the fall ready to grow as a church family.

Growing Together,

Rev. John Denton

## Ways you can give your tithes, gifts and offerings:

- In person at the weekly worship service.
- Online at [www.gpcvista.org](http://www.gpcvista.org). Choose the "Donate" button and you can pay by credit or debit card or with a PayPal account or scan the QR code to the right.
- Mail or drop off to the church office (if office is closed, drop into the mail slot near the front door to the Fellowship Hall) at 1450 E. Vista Way, Vista, CA 92084



## Stewardship Corner

### A Strong Church

*"And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches." Acts 15:41*

As Christians, we are to be the best version of who we are wherever we are and that includes the church we attend. We should have a strengthening influence in our local churches. The apostle Paul was intent on strengthening the Body of Christ, and Acts 15:41 brings up a good question: As you go through life, are you strengthening the church you attend?

1. We strengthen the church when we attend regularly as often as possible.
2. We strengthen the church when we're warm and supportive in our attitude toward all the other members, visitors, and toward the leaders.
3. We strengthen the church when we volunteer for those church related ministries the Lord puts on our hearts.
4. We strengthen the church when we pray for our congregation and provide financial support.

When Jesus returned to heaven, He only ordained one organization to continue His work on earth: His Church. How wonderful we can do as Paul did – going around strengthening the Church.

## Financial Statement As of July 31, 2025

	July 2025	YTD 2025	YTD 2025 Budget
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$ 50,342</b>	<b>\$ 350,961</b>	<b>\$ 443,625</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$ 51,284</b>	<b>\$ 319,031</b>	<b>\$ 437,782</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$- 942</b>	<b>\$ 31,930</b>	<b>\$ 5,843</b>

Note: Income includes 12-month distribution from the Legacy Fund; and unbudgeted \$45,249 from the government Employee Retention Credit program.

*Ladies, You're Invited!*

*"A Lifetime of Service:  
Our God is an Awesome God!"*

*Guest Speaker, Alice Nolf  
Retired Nurse Practitioner,  
Lifetime Servant of Christ*



*Saturday, September 20  
10 am to Noon with a light brunch*

*Join us & bring a friend*

*Sign up on the patio or call the  
church office, (760) 724-0077*

## Come Join Us!

### Requirements:

- Desire to join others in praising God through His gift of music

### Not Required:

- Musical training/music reading



**Thursdays, 7:00 pm  
Starting September 4**



## Evening Bible Study

Starting Monday, September 15, 2025

*Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*  
(provided by The BibleProject)

Participants will gain a foundational understanding of how the Hebrew Bible was formed, its unified literary design, and essential reading strategies.

Mondays 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm  
On the church campus, Room #9

## Men's Breakfast in September

Join us on September 6<sup>th</sup> at 8 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall for a full breakfast, good fellowship and time in the Word and in prayer. It is a great opportunity to feed your body and soul.





Isn't it a blessing to see ALL of the children gathered in worship each Sunday? The children we prayed for so earnestly are HERE!

With children, comes the need for children's ministries. We have 4 dedicated Sunday School teachers and our wonderful coordinator, Maria Haigh. California law requires we have two adults present when we are working with children at all times.

Maybe you don't feel you have the gift of teaching? That's OK! Every week we need a teacher's helper! No lesson planning needed! We just need your helping hands and a smile. AND, this can be a once a month commitment!

We prayed and God sent us the children. Now we have to answer His Call to instruct them. Won't you please consider volunteering once a month as a Sunday School Helper? If you volunteer in any way with children at Grace (VBS, After School Tutoring) you have the required safety requirements already.

Look for the Sunday School Signup sheet at Rally Day on September 7. Let's show we are thankful to God for answering our prayers!



## Thank you Fellowship Hall Painting Crew!



## Christmas Advent Craft Faire at Grace

**Nov. 2, 2025**

**Time: 11 am - 1 pm**

## Christmas Advent Craft Faire



We are excited to announce our plans to offer a wonderful selection of unique handmade cards, wooden displays, quilted zipper bags, baked goodies, Christmas crafts & more! All proceeds are donated to Grace Presbyterian Church.

Grace Presbyterian Church,  
1450 E. Vista Way,  
Vista CA 92084  
Free to attend!

Questions? Please contact Sue Bouchard if you are interested in participating.

[sbsuebouchard@gmail.com](mailto:sbsuebouchard@gmail.com) or text/call 760-419-2334



# Volunteer Spotlight: Margo Smalley

We all love to look at beautiful flower beds and well-kept gardens, we also appreciate the hard work that goes into it. The weeding, the mulch, the care. Margo cares. Any given weekday morning I might see Margo at work in flower bed. On Saturdays she rallies her friends and lays fresh mulch. On Sunday she picks up donuts from Krispy Kreme for all of us to enjoy Sunday morning on the patio. She works to pair kids and adults from the church with her Blessed Buddies ministry. She serves in so many places I am certainly forgetting a few. My point is not to name them all but instead to thank Margo for her wonderful all-encompassing ministry at Grace. I often hear people ask, "How can I help build the church?" It would be easy to say follow Margo. Margo sees the need and steps up. Thank you, Margo! It brings me great joy to serve alongside of you.

~John Denton

Margo is a dynamic servant always open to helping with the Shepherd's Pantry, picking up all the donuts for people to enjoy on Sunday and sharing her love of gardening to beautify the church campus. Margo is a blessing to all who love and know her! ~ Maria Haigh

Margo Smalley has been an integral part of Grace for many years. In fact she was on the Personnel Committee when I was hired, almost 12 years ago, and she helped to get our Child Protection policies in place. Margo is one of those people who seems to prefer to be behind the scenes but her service at Grace doesn't go unnoticed. From helping to fill bags in the Food Pantry, to keeping our garden beds looking beautiful, to teaching kiddos at VBC, and maybe the most important of all is picking up the donuts for us on Sunday mornings. Thank you Margo for being a faithful servant at Grace for so many years and in so many ways! ~ Christie Elliott

Do you enjoy our Sunday morning donuts and the socializing all around them after church? Then thank Margo Smalley. Each week, she drives from her Vista home to the Krispy Kreme in Oceanside to pick up our treats before church. And after the service, there she is on the patio, serving up donuts and coffee that she has helped set out – all with a smile and a friendly greeting. Why? Margo serves others. Whether she's participating with the Fellowship Committee, being a dedicated helper in the food pantry, teaching at VBC, or even pulling weeds in our flower beds, she uses her time, talents, and care for others to strengthen our church and our community. No fanfare—just love—and service. Thank you, Margo. ~ Jayne Parker

## MARGO SMALLEY



When I think of Margo Smalley, the first word that comes to my mind... Dynamo!! Don't let her petite frame and quiet demeanor fool you. Margo is a bundle of energy and an absolute blessing to Grace. There wouldn't be Krispy Kream donuts on Sundays if Margo didn't go out of her way to pick them up; and when she cannot attend church, she makes sure there is a backup (thank you Larry Luther!). She helps with food distribution, works on the church grounds to make sure it's beautifully groomed and serves on the Fellowship Committee. I appreciate her ideas on how to make our events better and how she runs circles around me as she's helping to set and clean up. She's always a step ahead of me! Did you know Margo is a calligraphy expert? She does a magnificent job on name badges and making signs for coffee, tea, hot water, etc. Truly a work of art. Margo is also a devoted grandmother to her 3 beautiful granddaughters. She picks them up on a regular basis, takes them to their practices and games to cheer them on and so much more. Margo has a true servant's heart as she serves our Lord by serving all those around her. Thank you, Margo, and know you are so loved by the family of Grace!

~ Arlene Cratsa



We are so excited to share that we have officially begun our **second school year** here at Grace Presbyterian Church Preschool! It is a true blessing to walk alongside this church

family as we nurture, teach, and grow with the children entrusted to our care.

Our **toddler classroom is full**, and we are currently prayerfully searching for our next teacher and students to help us fill a second classroom. With your support, the preschool has undergone some wonderful updates over the summer. We've added **new furniture, patched and painted walls,**

**cleaned and refreshed our outdoor toys, and redesigned our classrooms** to create a more engaging, welcoming space where our returning students can learn, play, and grow in new ways.

We are also excited to have started our **weekly chapel time!** The children look forward to "going to church" each **Tuesday morning** — a joyful and meaningful part of their week. Our Family Chapel will continue to be held on the **last Tues-**

**day of every month from 8:00–9:30 AM.** If you feel called to serve, we would love for members of the congregation to volunteer during this time to **greet families, build connections,** and extend the warm hospitality of Grace.

Additionally, we are in need of a few volunteers to help us **assemble furniture** for our indoor and outdoor classrooms. If you're handy or simply willing to lend a hand, your time and support would mean so much.

We are looking ahead to a beautiful month of growth for our students. In early September, we

will be welcoming **two more young toddlers**, and we feel so blessed to continue expanding our little preschool family.

Thank you for your prayers, your encouragement, and your partnership in this ministry. We are grateful to be growing together in God's love.

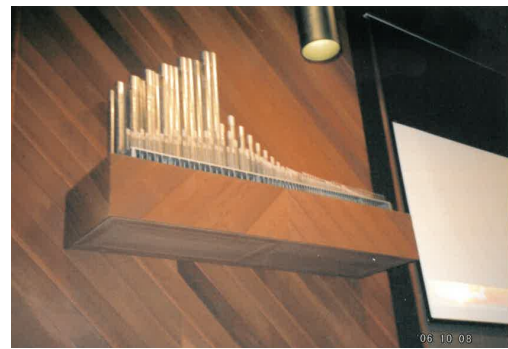
With gratitude,

Grace Presbyterian Church Preschool Staff



## Tour of the Organ

"Have you ever wondered where the organ music comes from? Or how the sound gets from the organ console you see on the chancel to the air above you in the sanctuary? Well now, there are answers to be seen!! If you would like a behind-the-scenes look at the pipes from whence come the music, the pipe chamber will be open for viewing on Sep. 28 after church. Sign-ups on the patio beginning September 8. Please note: there will be steps to climb and a narrow walkway to navigate. Any questions? Ask Frances.



## Missions: Peace & Global Witness Offer-

### Romans 14:19: "Pursue What Makes for Peace"

"All who follow Jesus, all around the world.

Yes, we are the church together!"

As we sing this hymn we declare that, indeed, the church was created to be connected.

We can feel the power of the connectional church at work whenever individuals, congregations, mid councils, and our national and global partners serve together to the glory of God, creating a uniquely interconnected tapestry that reflects both the unity and diversity of God's beautiful Creation.

This tapestry is not only a reflection of the distinctiveness of each person but also embodies the strength, resilience and powerful force — God — who connects us, even as it simultaneously demonstrates the importance of each individual thread.

The apostle Paul tells the Romans that we are to pursue what makes for peace, to build each other up, and to not cast judgment on those who are different from us or have different customs or needs than our own.

The Peace & Global Witness Offering helps to pursue peace in a variety of ways. Gifts to the Offering are combined with others to support Presbyterian mission and ministry around the world. Our congregation and presbytery keep a portion to help us be peacemakers in our own communities by meeting needs and ensuring every person can flourish.

Our participation in supporting this Offering helps us see the face of God in all people. May the offerings of our time, talent, and self be used by God and by our congregation to pursue what makes for peace today and in the future.

### Let us pray:

*Loving God, help us as we work to pursue peace. May we see your face in those we meet in our neighborhoods and around the world. Show us how we might be bringers of peace to the rich tapestry you created for all of your people. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*





# Grandparents' Day of Prayer

Join Us in Making  
September 7, 2025  
(National Grandparents' Day)

## A Grandparents' Day of Prayer

*Are you a praying grandparent who believes in the power of prayer on behalf of your grandchildren?*

*Grace Presbyterian Church will use part of the Worship Service on September 7 to honor and focus on praying for our grandchildren. If you don't have grandchildren, it is a time to focus on someone younger to pray for. There is indeed a full-out war for the hearts, minds, and souls of our children and grandchildren, and spiritual wars need spiritual weapons. **We can be those weapons.***

*God has given us the power of His Word and prayer as our weapons against the attacks of evil that harm our loved ones.*



**BRING A GRANDCHILD TO CHURCH ON SEPT 7.  
THERE WILL BE A SPECIAL GUEST.**

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

SUNDAYS

9am How to Read the Bible Class  
9:30am Prayer Group  
10am In Person Worship (Sanctuary)  
10am Online Worship

MONDAYS

7pm AA

TUESDAYS

8am Food Pantry Distrib. (no 9/2)  
9:15am Preschool Chapel  
10:30am Staff Meeting  
2:00pm Meals of Grace

WEDNESDAYS

6:30pm AA Men's Group  
7pm Worship Band Rehearsal

THURSDAYS

9:15am Bible 101  
10am Bible Study  
7pm Choir Rehearsal

FRIDAYS

8am Food Distribution

SATURDAYS



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	1 Happy Labor Day	2	3 12:30pm Personnel	4	5	6 8am Men's Breakfast
7 Rally Day Grandparents@Prayer Sunday	8	9 6:30pm Deacons	10 9am B & G	11 8:30am PEO	12	13
14 11:15am Worship Committee	15 7pm Evening Bible Study	16 4:30pm Fellowship Committee	17 12:30pm Finance Com. 2:30pm ASP Tutoring	18	19	20 10am Women's Event
21 11:15am Christian Ed. Meeting	22 7pm Evening Bible Study	23 6:30pm Session	24 2:30pm ASP Tutoring	25 8:30am PEO	26	27 10am PCSS
28	29 7pm Evening Bible Study	30				



1	Dorene Comerford	12	Pat Whisler
2	Mark Hiltbrand	14	Shirlee Sampsel
	Donna Hubner		Kimberly Sparkman
3	Ben Elliott	15	Norm Long
11	Peg Long	26	Scott Earnest
12	Anna Belle Beaman	29	Tom Krasovic

30 Earl & Valerie Allen (36 years)

If you have a birthday or anniversary in September and your name does not appear above, please contact the church office at 760-724-0077 to update our records. Thank you!



Rex Bassett

Barbie Nicholson

Apollo Bostian  
(Elizabeth Bostian's Son)

Parker Family

Bev Bush

Christina Sailors  
(Steven Sailors Mother)

**PLEASE PRAY FOR:**

Hannah Dukes

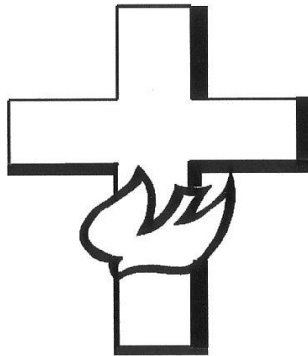
Judi Salazar

John Earnest

Tricia Sanger

Gary Eldridge

Robert Sawyer  
(Terry-Jeanne's Son)



Helen Frederick

Terry-Jeanne Sawyer

Laurie Gilmore  
(Pat Sexton's Sister)

Sparkman Family

Betty Haver

Arcilia Tauber

Chandy Jacob  
(Annie Kumar's Brother)

Duane Weston

Annie Kumar

Whisler Family

Suzy Long

Mary Wilhem  
(Arlene Cratsa's Sister)

Eliza Newton  
(Sailor's friend)

Woolsey Family



## GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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[www.gpcvista.org](http://www.gpcvista.org)

Address Service Requested

WHERE GOD'S FAMILY  
GROWS



[facebook.com/GPCVista](https://facebook.com/GPCVista)

### Church Staff

Pastor/Head of Staff

Director of Church Operations

Dir. of Community Relations

Preschool Director

Preschool Teacher

Toddler Teacher

Custodian

Music Director

Organist

Praise Band Leader

Financial Specialist

Hand Bell Choir Director

Choir Section Leader

Rev. John Denton

Christie Elliott

Maria Haigh

Frankie Zavala

Lesley Stong

Miriam Mojica Santos

Savannah Haigh

Jayne Parker

Frances Hummel

Scott Huston

Albina Lumetta

Pat Sexton

Chris Nolf



GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IS A CONFESSING CHURCH,  
and we believe:

That Jesus Christ alone is Lord of all and the way of salvation.

That Holy Scripture is the true God's revealed Word,  
the Church's only infallible rule of faith and life.

That God's people are called to holiness in all aspects of life.