



Learning & Living God's Word



With horses in the paddock next door and cattle grazing across the road, one would be justified in thinking that Grace Presbyterian Church is only a small country church in pastoral DeSoto County Florida. And while we are not a large church, we are also not simply a country church far from city lights and population. However, Grace Presbyterian Church is a small, friendly and caring congregation in a mixed suburban/rural setting. Our congregation has many active seniors and working adults and families with children. Our church experiences population fluctuations each year, with some congregants leaving for the North in spring and returning in the fall.

Grace began in 1989 as a church plant, via our sister church, Providence Christian Church, meeting in a local middle school cafeteria. In 1994, we became a particular church in the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) denomination and began operating under our own Session. In 1995, we purchased land in Lake Suzy, Florida, located just a few miles into DeSoto County. We were soon able to begin construction, and in 1996, we moved into our current building. We are blessed with a mortgage-free building that has been expanded twice. Pastor Sammie M. Brooks our founding Pastor faithfully taught and preached God's Word from 1990 until he moved on in 2015. Later that year we called Rev. David Stewart as our pastor. He continues to shepherd the flock at Grace today.



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At Grace we are a congregation with a membership of 91 and average attendance of 74. We have been blessed with four Ruling Elders and one Ruling Elder Emeritus. We are going through a generational leadership change and currently have no Deacons and one Deacon Emeritus. We expect to have new Deacons trained and installed within the next six to twelve months.

To edify our congregation and reach out to those around us we have the following activities.

Grace Missions Committee – The congregation of Grace has a heart for missions, and financially support eight missionaries and five ministry organizations, four local and one international. The congregation is kept informed about our missionaries monthly, or as special circumstances arise.

Beginning in February 1998, the church has focused on missions. What began as a Missions Festival one weekend in February, has grown into a month-long emphasis with visits or communications from our supported missionaries or missions each Sunday centered around a particular theme. There is a concluding luncheon on the last Sunday. Often, other missionaries in the area attend the event as well.

During the Missions Festival, we always have a Missions project(s) to support one or more of our missionaries. The project(s) is introduced prior to the festival, during the church service, and the congregation has always been generous in contributing to these projects. This missionary emphasis is led by congregants and encouraged by the pastor.

Fellowship Committee – The Fellowship Committee was established to coordinate fellowship activities, to allow the members to visit and get better acquainted in a casual atmosphere. The main activity is a light lunch after the worship service on the last Sunday of the month from October through May. The committee also plans and hosts other special dinners as required.

Small Groups – During the season (fall through spring), small groups meet in homes or at the church for Bible study and/or other studies. There are usually at least three groups operating.

Choir – We have a skilled organist and pianist. From fall to spring, the choir meets during the week to rehearse and sing on Sundays.

Area Food Bank – The congregation regularly donates food to the area food bank for those in need. This is an ongoing project.



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Benevolence Fund – On Sundays when the Lord's Supper is celebrated, the congregation is encouraged to donate to our Benevolence Fund. This fund is used for both our members and people from the community who are in financial distress.

Grace Presbyterian Church is in Lake Suzy, Florida, an unincorporated community in DeSoto County. It is located at the extreme southwest corner of DeSoto County in a ranching and agricultural area that is typical of the rest of the county. Arcadia is a city and the county seat of DeSoto County with a population of 7,700. Arcadia's Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is known for its many antique shops and its nationally renowned rodeo. Arcadia is 18 miles northeast of the church.

However, a trip of four miles in the other direction places you in the middle of a commercial and residential area on the outskirts of Port Charlotte with hotels and restaurants. Due to the church's proximity to Port Charlotte, a growing community (pop 65,500) in Charlotte County, it is in that county that many within the congregation reside.

Water is the great attraction in Charlotte County. The harbor formed by the junction of the Peace and Myakka rivers with the Gulf of Mexico is Florida's largest estuary system. With hundreds of miles of waterways, offering breathtaking Gulf sunsets and beaches only 20 miles away, freshwater and saltwater adventures, world-class fishing, award-winning restaurants and access to exciting sports events. Punta Gorda (population 20,000) is on the south side of the Peace River and is the location of a regional airport serving over 2 million passengers a year and hosting one of the highest rated air shows in the nation is only 13 miles from the church.

Our Pastor, David Stewart, has been our shepherd for the past nine years. His pastoral care for this flock has led to growth and deepening commitment to the Christian faith among the congregants. But his care for the individuals and families under his leadership has a price, and that price is time. The congregation and Session have both seen the need to protect what we have in a shepherd by seeking to bring a fellow shepherd along side of him to lighten his load and guard his health and well-being. To achieve that, we seek someone to fill the following roles and responsibilities.

- Preach 8-12 Sundays per year
- Participate in Sunday services on a regular basis
- Participate in administering the sacraments
- Share in Sunday school teaching
- Oversee small group ministry



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- Lead weekly bible study
- Facilitate catechetical training with parents
- Facilitate outreach efforts (including prayer sessions)
- Facilitate welcome/greeting
- Manage website and online recordings
- Publish weekly newsletter
- Assist pastor in home and hospital visitation
- Attend Session meetings
- Attend Presbytery
- To be included in delegation to General Assembly

We are seeking a man whose highest priority is discipleship and teaching God's Word. *He should have* a pastoral heart to help the Senior Pastor shepherd and encourage the saints, a capable preacher, gifted in evangelism and gathering, with a *gift* for church administration as he will be expected to assume part of the administrative load as well as filling the pulpit regularly. We look at this position as training and experience for transitioning into a solo or senior pastorate as there will be opportunities in all areas of pastoral ministry. Our church services are traditional in style.