

WELCOME TO GRACE CHURCH

A people gladly serving the Lord Jesus and neighbors near and far

BECAUSE OF THE LORD'S GREAT LOVE, WE ARE NOT CONSUMED, FOR HIS COMPASSIONS NEVER FAIL. THEY ARE NEW EVERY MORNING; GREAT IS YOUR FAITHFULNESS.

A Service Of Covenant January 5, 2025 (9 a.m.)

(“Come as you are ... then go home different”)

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216 S. Market Street, Mechanicsburg, Pa. 17055 Church Phone: (717) 766-3282

Email is gracechurch216@gmail.com Website is <https://www.gracechurchmech.com/>

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PASTOR: W. Michael Langford

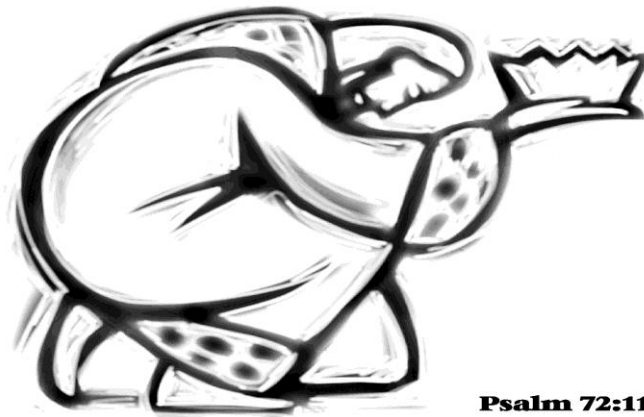
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Chris Peters (9 a.m.- 5 p.m. on Thursdays)

MINISTERS: All of us! (We are all ministers of God's grace and we're on-duty '24/7')

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On Christmas, 1747, John Wesley urged all Methodists to renew their covenant with God. A first Covenant Service was held August 11, 1755. He issued this as a pamphlet in 1780; the form was used without much alteration for 100 years. Over time, changes have been made to address people's spiritual needs. This service follows Wesley's closely, 'with a deep sense of the importance of the service which has been a fruitful source of blessing to Methodism since 1755'.

**May all kings
fall down
before him,
all nations give
him service.**



Psalm 72:11

Serving God (And Us) With Music.....Chris Peters and Linda Langford

A Welcome From Our Liturgist: Melanie Langford

GATHERING HYMN “Gentle Mary”

*(1) Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger; There He lay, the undefiled,
To the world a stranger: Such a babe in such a place, can He be the Savior?
Ask the saved of all the race who have found His favor.*

*(2) Angels sang about His birth; wise men sought & found Him; Heaven’s star
Shone brightly forth, glory all around Him: Shepherds saw the wondrous sight,
Heard the angels singing; All the plains were lit that night, all the hills were ringing.*

INVOCATION and LORDS PRAYER

*Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen*

OPENING HYMN # 103 “Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”

*(1) Immortal, invisible, God only wise, in light inaccessible
Hid from our eyes. Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.*

*(2) Unresting, unhasting and silent as light, nor wanting, nor wasting,
Thou rulest in might. Thy justice like mountains high soaring above
Thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.*

*(3) To all, life thou givest, to both great and small; in all life thou livest,
The true life of all. We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish, but naught changeth thee.*

*(4) Thou reignest in glory; thou dwellest in light; thine angels adore thee,
All veiling their sight. All laud we would render: O help us to see
‘Tis only the splendor of light hideth thee.*

BODY BUILDING We greet one another and share a little “good news”!

----- THE COVENANT SERVICE -----

THE INVITATION TO COVENANT WITH GOD

THE ACT OF ADORATION

(Pastor closes by saying: “Praise the Father, from whom all things come.”)

ALL: ‘We praise Thee, O God: we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord’

(Pastor closes by saying: “Praise be to Christ, God’s only Son!”)

ALL: “Thou art the King of glory, O Christ.”

(Pastor closes by saying: “All praise to the Spirit, that makes us one!”)

ALL: “We praise Thee, Holy Spirit. Amen.”

SILENT PRAYER In a quiet moment, let’s thank God for His mercies.

PRAISE SONG “What A Mighty God”

**(CHORUS) What a mighty God we serve! What a mighty God we serve!
What a mighty God we serve! What a mighty God we serve!**

(1) Let us sing and praise the Lord. (repeat three more times)

(CHORUS) What a mighty God we serve! (repeat three more times)

(2) Let us shout and praise His Name. (repeat three more times)

(CHORUS) What a mighty God we serve! (repeat three more times)

ACT OF THANKSGIVING We sing “We praise Thy holy name, O Lord” (tune # 60)

PRAISE SONG “There Is A Redeemer”

**(1) There is a Redeemer: Jesus, God’s own Son;
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Holy One.**

**(CHORUS) Thank You, O, my Father, for giving us Your Son,
And leaving Your Spirit ‘til the work on earth is done.**

**(2) Jesus, my Redeemer, name above all names;
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah....O for sinners slain. (Chorus)**

**(3) When I stand in Glory, I will see His face;
There I’ll serve my King forever....in that holy place. (Chorus)**

THANKSGIVING AND PRAYERS You may share prayer concerns at this time

THE GOOD NEWS Luke 2:21-40

**“For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all
people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”
The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him.**

TODAY’S MESSAGE Pastor Mike Langford

“Resolution”

THE ACT OF CONFESSION

PASTOR: “Have mercy, O God”.....ALL: “Have mercy and forgive us, O Lord”

SILENT CONFESSION.....WORDS OF ASSURANCE

THE COVENANT COVENANT PRAYER

**I am no longer my own, but thine. Put me to what You will, rank me with whom You will;
put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for Thee or laid aside for Thee,
exalted for Thee or brought low for Thee; let me be full, let me be empty;
let me have all things, let me have nothing; I freely and heartily yield all things to Thy pleasure and disposal.
And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Thou art mine, and I am Thine. SO BE IT.
And the covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.**

CLOSING RESPONSE: Lift up your hearts! (WE LIFT THEM UP UNTO THE LORD!)

Let us give thanks unto the Lord! **(IT IS MEET AND RIGHT SO TO DO.)**

PASTOR continues reading and concludes with... "evermore praising Thee, and saying:"

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, LORD GOD OF HOSTS: HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE FULL OF THY GLORY! GLORY BE TO THEE, O LORD MOST HIGH! AMEN

CLOSING HYMN # 102 "Now Thank We All Our God

(1) Now thank we all our God, with heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices; who from our mothers' arms
Has blessed us on our way with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.

(2) O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us, with ever joyful hearts
And blessed peace to cheer us; and keep us still in grace, and guide us when perplexed;
And free us from all ills, in this world and the next.

(3) All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given; the Son, and him who reigns
With them in highest heaven; the one eternal God, whom earth and heaven adore;
For thus it was, is now, and shall be evermore.

We thank you for presenting tithes and offerings in the plates found at the exits.

CHALLENGE and POSTLUDE

THIS WORSHIP SERVICE IS OVER. Now begins our Christian service in Jesus' Name



We are **not** on a "167-hour vacation from faith" after this worship ends. We show the grace daily!

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MINISTRY CHALLENGE...Encourage friends who make important New Year's RESOLUTIONS. Remind them that they can "do good for Jesus" in 2025 if they "F.R.O.G." ("Fully Rely On God")!

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FROM LAST WEEK...It was our Sunday after Christmas "Carol-Sing"! The song "Child So Lovely" is a traditional Christmas lullaby from Venezuela which gives great honor to Mary. "Joy To The World" is based on a Psalm and pictures Christ's 2nd coming more than it His first! We rejoice that Jesus "rules the world with truth and grace". "The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy" is a song from Trinidad that welcomed celebration as wandering musicians share joy! In "Angels We Have Heard On High" we wonder if the shepherds know what they had seen and heard in the manger. "Rock-a-Bye, My Dear Little Boy" has a hint of melancholy as Mary considers her baby's future. Joseph named the little baby: "Jesus": which means "God saves". "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" doesn't mention the birth of Christ, but embraces the ways of peace in our current culture. "Away In A Manger" came about in our own Pennsylvania. The Savior who fits us for Heaven is one who also cries like any baby. We pray that He would stay by our cradle "til morning is nigh". "That Beautiful Name" is one that we should be honored to "name every day". "Bring a Torch, Jeannette Isabella" was a dance tune telling of Christ's birth and a journey to tell all the villagers. "I Heard The Bells On Christmas Day" came from Longfellow's tragedy: God is not dead after all. Even if you don't like figgy pudding, "We Wish You A Merry Christmas!" Pastor Mike told us that our Newborn King calls us to be "Getting Around To It": all the Christmas ways of mercy and love.