

## FAQ's About Grace Church

**1. How old is Grace Church?** Officially, we were founded in 1814, so we are over 200 years old! The first structure was built on this site in 1822. The second structure was constructed in 1868. It was mostly destroyed by fire in 1907 and rebuilt. The windows in the front of the sanctuary, dramatically depicting the Ascension of the Lord, were donated by dedicated member, Harvey Firestone. Grace Church has overcome many problems and thrived in promoting the gospel to Columbiana and the world. By the grace and mercy of God, we are a church that renews itself every generation with new members.

**2. To what denomination does Grace Church belong?** Grace Church is a Congregational Christian Church, a member of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches, based in Oak Creek, WI. We are a volunteer member of an association of like-minded churches (NACCC) who recognize the right of the individual local church to be autonomous under the headship of Christ. We are also members of the Ohio Assn. of Congregational Christian Churches. In the past, Grace has belonged to the Reformed Church, the Evangelical and Reformed Church, and the United Church of Christ.

**3. What is Congregationalism?** Briefly, we believe in the local autonomy of the congregation to decide what God wants us to do and believe. Our congregation owns our property and building, not a denomination, presbytery, or diocese. We determine, with guidance from God, our own budget and exactly how we spend our mission funds. We find and call our own pastor. We determine, again, with God's guidance, our own stance if we wish to have one, on the social issues of the day. We have supportive and cooperative friendship and fellowship with other Congregational Christian Churches and often join with them in partnership on larger mission projects here and around the world.

**4. What missions does Grace support?** We support many! For example, we support local missions: The Way Station, Hospice, United Social Action, The Rescue Mission, Habitat for Humanity and Meals on Wheels, among others. Regionally, we support Hosanna Industries which is a housing ministry north of Pittsburgh. Nationally, we support the Morgan-Scott Project in the Appalachian region of Tennessee/North Carolina. Internationally we support the Pilgrim's Presence Ministries in Kenya, the Congregational Churches of Myanmar in Asia, and Mission Mazahua. We also support the Confirmation Mission Work trip (national) of our Confirmation Class, along with a number of charities like the ALS Foundation. In what we say and do, we are God's people trying to do God's work as best we can, to God's glory.

**5. What do Congregational Christians believe?** In brief, Congregational Christians have a variety of beliefs across the spectrum of Christianity. Each congregation is autonomous under the headship of Christ. Therefore, the question is "What do Grace Church people believe?" Grace Church members mainly hold to traditional Christian doctrines as outlined in such statements as the Apostle's Creed. We do allow for, and encourage, questions about faith. We seek those answers together guided by the Bible and the Spirit.

**6. What can I expect when I come to worship?** What we hear from those who have visited is that we are a friendly congregation! Our current service at 10:45 a.m. (mid-September – May) is a strongly traditional service with the deep sounds of the organ, majestic hymns, and sweet choir singing! The pastor's sermons (and children's sermons) are helpful and thought-provoking. A fully staffed nursery is available (just outside the sanctuary) for those up to five years old. There are bags of worship activities just inside the sanctuary for those five and up. We have a coffee hour immediately after worship in the downstairs fellowship hall where there is coffee, tea, cookies, and punch or lemonade. Non-traditional services include a coffeehouse worship service (The Holy Grounds Coffeehouse) in the fellowship hall and a Worship on the Green service out doors.