

# Say Hello to Grace Baptist Church



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## Church Profile

Nestled in the heart of the Columbia River Gorge, Grace Baptist Church is a gospel-centered church community committed to the mission of “love God, love people, making disciples, following Jesus.” With a passion for truth and transformation, the mission and ministry of Grace maintains a robust counseling ministry, dedicated service to families and youth, and a heart for church planting and revitalization both locally and beyond.

Grace Baptist began in 1957 as a house church. In 1958, Grace voted to be affiliated with Church Venture NW, while maintaining independence and church governance at the local level. The church moved to a building in 1963, purchased land in 1986, and began construction on its current building in 2003. Concentrated effort saw the mortgage paid off in the Spring of 2022.

Grace Baptist follows an Elder-led, congregationally affirmed government structure. The Lead Pastor shepherds the flock as a teacher and equipper, working in concert with the Elder Board of 11 godly men who safeguard the spiritual health and doctrinal integrity of the church. There are 15 Deacons and 10 Deaconesses who serve to meet the practical needs within the congregation and beyond. Guided by biblical principles, the church’s constitution and bylaws provide a framework for ministry.

The current membership includes 135 active members who have entered into the covenant community. Weekly worship attendance has remained steady over the past year, averaging upwards of 250 on any given Sunday, including a vibrant population of young children and families who participate in the nursery and children’s ministries.





The church staff includes five paid positions: Lead Pastor (full-time), Pastor's Executive Assistant (part-time), Worship Pastor (part-time), Ministry Administrative Assistant (part-time), and Facilities Maintenance Manager (part-time). The Maintenance position is currently vacant. A Youth and Families Pastor position is looking to be filled in the near future. In anticipation of hiring a new pastor, the current Lead Pastor will transition to a part-time Pastor Emeritus position, offering wisdom, guidance, and mentorship to future leadership.

Relationship-building ministry programs thrive across generations, including Sunday School for all ages, Children's Church, Youth Group, and Grace Groups, as well as men's



and women's Bible studies, dedicated prayer groups, and community service projects. Leadership development programs are consistently offered to identify, train, and empower next-generation shepherds and leaders.

Grace Baptist engages the community through events like Night to Shine, Rodeo Bible Camp, Vacation Bible School, the Festival of Light, and worship service at the Huckleberry Festival. The church faithfully supports multiple mission trips to Mexico, both financially and through many volunteers. International missionaries in countries such as Ecuador, Indonesia, and the Philippines are a focus of the church, as well as local organizations such as Hope Medical Clinic.



Financially, the church remains healthy. In 2024, the combined fund balance began at \$176k with \$588k in deposits and \$587k in expenses, closing the year with a healthy balance of \$177k. The outlook for 2025 is equally promising, with the budget set at \$528k, allowing continued focus on ministry expansion and mission sustainability.

As Grace Baptist looks to the future, the desire is to deepen its impact through intentional shepherding of the church community and strengthened evangelism while remaining devoted to being a church that grows in biblical grace, truth, and faithfulness — making disciples who shine the light of Christ in White Salmon and beyond.



# Lead Pastor Profile



We are a Bible believing church in White Salmon, WA. The Lead Pastor shall be an elder amongst elders with the responsibility of leading, preaching, teaching, equipping, and shepherding church leaders. In concert with the elders, the lead pastor is the primary communicator in leading the church toward fulfilling its mission and vision. He is to serve the elders and other church leaders, deacons, and deaconesses in the implementation of the vision and spiritual direction of the church.

He is a catalyst for the elders and other leaders in the coordination and organization of the ministries of the church for the purpose of achieving the goals that are in line with the vision, values, and mission of the church. He primarily serves in five key functions: overseer, mentor to elders and key church leaders, preacher, teacher, and spiritual administrator.



Our longtime senior pastor is ready to retire. At the request of the Elders, he has agreed to stay on part time, for a time, as Pastor Emeritus, with the intent to serve in a limited role focusing on discipleship, missions, and helping with the pastoral transition.

# Community Profile



Grace Baptist Church is located in the central Columbia River Gorge (the Gorge) in Southwest Washington. The Gorge is a community of rural communities, spanning both sides of the river and encompasses the population centers of Stevenson, Carson, White Salmon, Bingen, Trout Lake, and Lyle in Washington, and Hood River, Odell, Parkdale, Mosier, and The Dalles in Oregon.

The Gorge is largely a middle-class white community (68%). However, the local Hispanic community (23%) continues to grow in both their socio-economic status as well as integration into the traditional Gorge community. Other notable ethnicities are the local native American community as well as a number of families of Japanese descent who own large orchards in the area. Overall, the median age is 43 years, with a quarter of the population in the 35-54 range and another quarter age 65 or older.

The cities of White Salmon/Bingen are populated by just over 3000 people; however, the greater Western Klickitat County has a population of 7000. The city of Hood River, Oregon is home to 8000 people but has a population of 23,000 in the corresponding Hood River County. A total of 64k people live within 20 miles of Grace Church.

Most of the towns support a single high school, middle school, and elementary school. There are a handful of private schools – a few of which are faith-based. Since COVID, there has been a rise in the number of homeschool households. These operate within a variety of groups, including one that meets at Grace Baptist Church. A community college has campuses in Hood River and The Dalles, Oregon.

Three hospitals, a wide selection of specialist clinics, several dental offices, chiropractors, and other health-oriented facilities are scattered throughout the area. Portland, Oregon and Vancouver, Washington are an hour's drive west and provide even more healthcare options. There are several nursing/long-term care facilities in operation, most of them in Oregon communities. White Salmon maintains an active Senior Center, as does Hood River and The Dalles. Limited public bus transportation is available and Amtrak trains stop regularly in Bingen, Washington.





City centers have city high density with standard residential parcels and some multi-family housing. The surrounding suburban areas have half acre parcels which give way to 1-, 2-, 5- and 10-acre parcels as one travels into rural areas. Farther out, land is in large 20 acre and above lots that generally serve as residential/agricultural/timber parcels. There are large agricultural lots and timber production properties as well. State and federal lands buffer the Gifford Pinchot National Forest and Mt Adams in Washington and the Mount Hood National Forest in Oregon. While there are large areas of undeveloped forest and agricultural land, zoning regulations and the National Scenic Area make these lands difficult and expensive to develop. Gorge communities do not often experience vacant buildings or lands, primarily due to purchase of the properties by outside investments.

The Gorge experiences a wide range of festivals and events including many orchestral, choral, art, wine, and theatrical activities throughout the year, as well as fairs, farmer markets, craft bazaars and holiday celebrations. It is a major attraction for every sort of outdoor recreation possible. Locations like Mt Hood and Mt Adams, the Columbia, White Salmon, and Klickitat Rivers, and the large number of orchards, vineyards and other agricultural products keep the Gorge busy with an influx of outdoor enthusiasts, artisans, and young retirees.

