



WHO WE ARE

Who are we? Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church is a body of believers worshiping and serving Christ in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. Our history dates back to 1973, when Rev. Henry Fikkert conducted our first worship service. Since that time the congregation has experienced spiritual and numerical growth. With the help of nearby Bethel OPC in Oostburg, Grace Church endured some difficult and discouraging days. In 1989, the Reverend Lawrence Eyres was asked to serve as an interim Pastor. In 1993 the Reverend Ivan DeMaster took over the work when Rev. Eyres retired. Upon Pastor Ivan's retirement in 2005, the Reverend Brian De Jong was called.

Part of who we are is found in our name – Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church. By the grace of God we are what we are, and His grace to us was not without effect! We are a group of people who have experienced the free and sovereign grace of God. Because we have been saved by grace alone, we are set free to demonstrate grace and mercy toward other people as well.

We are also "Orthodox." Many assume that means "Eastern Orthodox," but we have no connection to that branch of Christianity. Rather, the name Orthodox was chosen in the early days of our denomination as a fitting designation. "Orthodox" really means "straight, right, sound." Webster defines Or-

thodox as "Sound in the Christian faith; believing the genuine doctrines taught in the Scriptures." The opposite of orthodox is heretical – those who believe and promote false doctrine contrary to the Scripture.

Furthermore, we are Presbyterian. The term "Presbyterian" refers to the rule of elders in the church. Our church government is not a hierarchy with bishops, archbishops or cardinals. Rather we believe in rule by a plurality of elders who govern the church as a team. That includes the minister and a selection of ruling elders, chosen by the congregation. Presbyterianism is a representative form of government that maintains connections with other churches in the local region (the Presbytery) and throughout the world (the General Assembly). These church courts together maintain the purity and fidelity of our faith and practice.

Last but not least, we are a Church – a visible group of people professing faith in Jesus Christ, together with our children. As a local church we belong to the larger regional church and to the Orthodox Presbyterian denomination. Our beliefs and our practice is governed primarily by the Bible, and secondarily by the Westminster Standards and our OPC Book of Church Order. To learn more about us, you are invited to visit our Presbytery website and our denominational website.