

Grace Baptist Church
719 Club Drive Statesville NC
August 15, 2026
For More Information: email gracestatesville@gmail.com

Politics, Gender and Religion - the Focus for Upcoming Davis Lectures

STATESVILLE, NC - Grace Baptist Church is presenting New York Times bestselling author Kristin Kobes Du Mez for its summer installment of the Davis Lectures Series on Wednesday, Sept. 2, at 7 p.m.

A writer, scholar and speaker, Du Mez explores the intersection of politics, gender and religion, and will be speaking on themes from her newest book, *Live Laugh Love: The Secret History of White Christian Women and the World They Made*. This book will be available for purchase at the Davis Lectures.

Her writing is described as "urgent and sharp-elbowed," and Du Mez does not refrain from presenting the hard truths that history has to offer Americans—and especially American Christians. Her unflinching examination of the American church, however, is ultimately a call to confession, a call to lament, and a call to greater faithfulness.

An academic by training, Du Mez holds a Ph.D. in U.S. history from the University of Notre Dame, but she writes and speaks for popular audiences in an entertaining style that is equal parts winsome and hard-hitting.

Carrilea Hall, GBC pastor, encouraged the community to take advantage of this opportunity to “participate in honest, thoughtful conversations about an important topic. This is a free event and is open to the public.”

ABOUT DU MEZ

Her bylines include The New York Times, the Washington Post, Daily Beast, Religion & Politics, Religion News Service, NBC News.com, and Christianity Today. Her work has also garnered extensive national and international attention, as a feature on NPR's Morning Edition, PBS's Amanpour & Co, the BBC, and in national outlets in China, Japan, Canada, Australia, Spain, Brazil, Germany, and the Netherlands. She is a frequent commenter on religion and politics in the national media at outlets such as the Washington Post, Religion News Service, NPR, CBS, Newsweek, CNN, and the BBC.

As a speaker, she has appeared at colleges and universities across the country, including the University of Notre Dame, Harvard University, Columbia University, UVA Law School, Baylor University, Pepperdine University, and the University of Oklahoma. Her public speaking has also included the Brookings Institution, Faith Angle Forum, Atlanta's TheoEd, Seattle's Crosscut Festival, the University of Chicago's Martin Marty Center, Johns Hopkins' Stavros Niarchos Foundation Angora Institute, and the Center for Pastor Theologians, and she has appeared at churches and faith groups across the religious spectrum.

Du Mez teaches at Calvin University and lives in Grand Rapids, Michigan, with her husband, three kids, and a dog named Paco.

ABOUT THE DAVIS LECTURES

Grace Baptist Church established the Davis Lectures in 2002 to offer the community an opportunity for serious inquiry and dialogue with respected religious scholars, historians, and authors. It is named in honor of the late Durham minister Dr. Richard T. Davis, who led the first series.

Typically held in the fall, the Davis Lectures began offering a summer lecture in 2023 in conjunction with the Wild Goose Festival, an annual four-day outdoor gathering in Iredell County focusing on the intersection of spirituality, music, art, and faith-inspired social justice.

Dr. Obid Safi, professor of Islamic Studies at Duke University, is the speaker for the 2026 Davis Lectures, Oct. 25-26. He specializes in the study of Islamic mysticism and contemporary Islam.

The Davis Lectures are free and open to the public. The format includes a time for discussion and fellowship following the lectures.

Organized in 1971 as an alternative Southern Baptist congregation, Grace Baptist withdrew from the SBC in 1983 and is now aligned with the Alliance of Baptists, the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, and the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists—a congregation reflecting varied regional religious backgrounds united by a shared commitment to being a servant church where every member is a minister.

More information on the history and schedule of the lectures can be found at gracestatesville.org.