

Tom Merritt is a native of Powdersville. He worships at the Powdersville campus with his wife, Allyison, and their youngest daughter, Emma, who is a senior at Wren High School. Their son, Clark, lives in Charleston with Tom's daughter-in-law, Lyndon, and they are part of the recent plant and launch of Grace City Church. Their oldest daughter, Addie, now lives in Austin, Texas, with son-in-law, Connor Perkins, who led worship at the Grace Church Anderson campus prior to their move. Lydia, their middle daughter, lives in Greenville with son-in-law, Jacob Cook, and they worship at the Downtown campus.

Tom graduated from Clemson University with an undergraduate degree in Secondary Education English and a Masters in Counseling. He has worked for the Greenville-based apparel company OOB since 1995. Tom loves to be outside, whether on the water or in the woods, and he most enjoys any time spent together with their growing family.

Although Tom grew up attending a mainline denominational church, it was through his involvement in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes at Clemson that he became a true follower of Christ. It also was in FCA at Clemson where Tom met his wife, Allyison. After they both finished Clemson, Tom taught at Greer Middle School and then Easley High School where he coached football and girls basketball and was a guidance counselor. The Clemson years proved to be relationally rich for Tom and Allyison in many ways. There they met Mike and Melissa Pereyo (who serve at the Pelham campus), and eventually, Tom and Mike would found OOB together in 1994.

Through FCA, Tom and Allyison also became close friends with Matt and Vicki Williams. In 1995, Matt & Vicki invited Tom and Allyison to be a part of their crazy idea for a church plant in the Upstate. That summer, Grace Church first met in Tom and Allyison's living room in Easley. Saying "yes" to this adventure would prove to be the most significant decision by this young couple, and it would forever—literally—impact the Merritt family. Allyison joins Tom in saying, "God continually uses Grace Church to shape our lives, teaching and shepherding us in new ways to be more mature followers of Jesus Christ, and for that, I am grateful. God is so very good and merciful to me, and much of his faithfulness to our family gets displayed through members of our church body and our journey together."