

GRACE *and Truth*



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For the law was given through Moses, but GRACE AND TRUTH came through Jesus Christ. (John 1:17)

August, 2015



Vacation Bible School

by Holly Phoenix

"There's nothing our God cannot do. Wow! I hope this is the lesson our kids took away from Vacation Bible School this year."

It's hard to believe another Vacation Bible School has come and gone. All the planning, organizing, and decorating that goes into it – and it's over in a flash! As I look back on the week, I am in awe of the work that was done for God. A big thank you to all who helped, whether it was donating supplies, bringing children, or volunteering your time in some way. We could not have done it without you!

This year we hosted 115 kids the first day, 130 the next two days, and 80 kids the last day. We were very fortunate to include the Noah's Ark kids again this year.

It is quite a sight to see that many young kids getting excited about the gospel. This year we challenged the kids to memorize one or two Scripture verses. I had a stack of about 100 coupons for ice cream to give away to anyone who memorized a verse. By the end of day three, we had to order more coupons! Even our preschool kiddos were excited to come share their verses with us. I was so proud of how many of them chose to share their verses and favorite things during the service on Sunday. Some of our quietest and shyest little ones were even eager to share. What a testament to the Holy Spirit working in them!

It seemed every time I walked into a room, I heard kids discussing one of the Bible stories. They couldn't believe Daniel only wanted to eat vegetables! One conversation I overheard was between a couple of our elementary kids and their group leader. They were discussing how Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stood up to King Nebuchadnezzar and refused to worship false gods even knowing what the consequence would be. The group leader asked them if they would be willing to stand up for their beliefs even if it meant being cast into a fiery furnace. One of the kids immediately responded, "Yes!" When asked why,

the child replied, "Because I know that God would protect me no matter what and wants me to stand up for Him." Wow! To be that young and strong in your faith! I can only hope we as leaders can be that strong in our faith and lead our young ones by example.

When I take a few moments to truly reflect on the week, I can't help but think of the song lyrics, "Our God is so big, so strong, and so mighty, there's nothing my God cannot do!" These are the words echoed throughout the week by our children and even Pastor Ryan as we learned about Daniel and his friends. *There's nothing our God cannot do.* Wow! I hope this is the lesson our kids took away from Vacation Bible School this year. I hope our kids remember these words each day as they face their own lions' dens and fiery furnaces. I hope the children look back on this week and think, "If God could save Daniel from a group of hungry lions; if Daniel could become stronger and smarter from only vegetables and water; and if three men could walk free from a hot, fiery furnace, then there really is nothing our God cannot do!"



The children performed a few of their favorite songs on the last day of Vacation Bible School during Sunday's church service. This year's VBS was held from Wednesday, July 8 through Sunday, July 12 and culminated with our church picnic.

Visit our website at www.indygrace.org

Fellowship Group Spotlight

OWLS

Steve Agal is teaching a study of Jesus from the book of Isaiah. Jesus the Messiah is alluded to, or directly spoken of, many times in Isaiah. Come and join us on Sunday mornings. OWLS of all ages are welcome. **The OWLS meet in room 112/113 at 9:00 a.m.**

WORD PROCESSORS

The Word Processors will be studying 2 Peter in August. Peter wrote to warn Christians to be aware of the false teachers who were spreading destructive doctrines among the churches. He also encouraged his Christian readers to grow in Christian character and to be patient as they wait for the Lord's return. **The Word Processors meet in Room 109/110 at 9:00 a.m.**

LEGACY

During the month of August, Rich Witmer will be teaching from the message-based questions. **The Legacy Fellowship Group meets in the café at 9:00 a.m.**

REFUGE

Mike Lawlis is conducting a study of the patriarchs. He began with Abraham and will continue with Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. The biblical patriarchs are the line of men God used to establish the nation of Israel. Perhaps the most well known of the biblical patriarchs is Abraham, because from him all Israelites descend. God made a covenant with him and promised that he would be "the father of many nations." (Genesis 17:4) The Refuge has a time of fellowship which includes sharing praises and prayer requests. **The Refuge class meets in room 115 at 9:00 a.m.**

YOUTH GROUP (Grades 6-12)

Sunday mornings will be a departure from teaching time to one of discussion and application of the sermon from the previous week. We are going to be encouraging the youth to learn how to think critically about what is being taught and how to apply that to our lives. **The Youth Group meets in Room 117 at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings and Sunday nights at 6:30 p.m.**

We Are Family

by Doug Decker

God created man to be in fellowship (Genesis 2:18). Over the course of the many generations since God gave Adam a helpmate, we have chosen to be in fellowship in many different ways: marriage (as God ordained), family, work, educational, civic, social, professional, neighborhood, sports, arts, etc.

The most important relationship we have is the relationship we have with our Creator. We do this through the recognition of ourselves as sinners in need of a Savior – Jesus Christ (Romans 3:23-26). When we confess this and repent of our sin, we become members of the family of God. As responsible members of God's family, He wants us to grow in the knowledge of Him (Ephesians 2:18-22). One of the best ways to do this is in a community with like-minded believers – encouraging and holding one another accountable.

The greatest desire of Grace is that each attendee and member grow in the grace and knowledge of God and His Son as a member of the family of God and Grace Evangelical Church (Acts 2:42-47). This is expressed in our vision "to **CONNECT** people together to worship God, **EQUIP** them together to become like Jesus Christ, and **MULTIPLY** together to reach the world. We strive to welcome people into Grace from wherever they are spiritually and draw them to Jesus so they can hunger for spiritual growth in a dynamic Body of Christ, studying God's Word and walking by His Spirit."

Our formal **CONNECTION** with the Grace community starts when we become members of the Grace family. To become a member of Grace one needs to attend the Belonging Class. In the class you will learn more about the

church leadership, doctrinal beliefs, areas of service and fellowship opportunities. In the Belonging Class you will share your testimony, describe how you came to Grace and indicate that you understand and agree with our 14 core doctrinal beliefs. You will be provided a membership application to fill out and turn in, after which you will meet with two elders prior to approval by the Elder Board. Following Elder Board approval an announcement is made to the congregation, allowing the rest of the family to welcome you into the community that calls itself Grace Evangelical Church.

EQUIPPING naturally flows out of connecting to Grace. As you join a fellowship or home group, study God's Word and apply it to your daily lives you are equipped to go out and tell others how His Word has changed you – **MULTIPLYING** God's family and the local church community.

If you are a regular attendee of Grace but haven't made the commitment to become a member of the Grace community, will you consider attending the next Belonging Class offered later this month? If you haven't put your faith and trust in Christ, recognizing yourself as a sinner in need of a Savior, will you read John 3:13-21 and seek out a pastor, elder or other leader in the church to discover how you too can become a member of the family of God? If you are a member of the Grace family, do you regularly participate in a fellowship or home group? How do you serve God and the church family as a contributing family member?

Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass under trees on a summer's day, listening to the murmur of the water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is by no means a waste of time.

– John Lubbock

European Church Planters

The Mission's Ministry at Grace has supported the work of the European Leadership Forum (ELF) for several years, mainly through sending money to our European missionaries and to nationals whom they are training. ELF is more than a conference as it provides ongoing resources through opportunities to network, as well as spiritual help, through the year. Our missionaries Daniel Goering and Ritch Trca have greatly benefited from attending ELF. Our church has helped Franta, a dedicated young church planter in the Czech Republic, attend the conference for the last five years. He has also done missionary work in Africa and Brazil. I enjoyed talking with Franta when I volunteered at the Forum previously. Below is a letter written by Ritch Trca, EFCA ReachGlobal Europe area leader serving in the Czech Republic and Central Europe.

—Carol Lawlis

"I believe this is the first time anyone has ever asked me that question," was the response of the European church planter who sat across from me as we shared a meal together. I had been invited to provide coaching and mentoring meetings with European national workers at the European Leadership Forum which I attended the beginning of June. About 700 national workers from all across Europe and the former Soviet countries, coming from a wide background of ministry experiences, gathered for five days of seminars, training, and networking events. I joined the church planting/coaching track, hoping to grow in my skills in coaching church planters as well as deepen relationships with those I already knew.

The question I had asked the man, who had already been involved in fruitful ministry for several years, was my attempt to get at and encourage the deep motivations that were energizing this faithful servant who was considering a change to church planting ministry. We had already discussed his calling, character, chemistry, and competencies as a church planter when I asked the question, "What do you think that God feels towards you as His beloved son?" A long, encouraging conversation followed which renewed in both of us God's unwavering pleasure He has in us as His sons.

Due to the financial sponsorship of Grace, Franta, a Czech church planter, was able to attend the training events for church planters. Because of our on-going relationship, I met with Franta during the conference as we debriefed several times about what he was learning, how the ideas and models of church planting that he was learning about might be implemented in his church planting context in the Czech Republic, and the next steps for personal growth in his own life that God was leading him to take.

Franta is presently working as a security guard with a company as he is developing the church planting core group within the city of Olomouc in the Czech Republic. The group hasn't grown as quickly as he would have desired, but Franta continues to serve them and encouraged them

to serve the community around them. The group is praying that they will be able to take part in church planting core group training this fall within a network of other church plants who are just beginning in various cities in the Czech Republic. Pray for Franta as he invests himself into the core group, as well as learning from Czech church planters within the network he desires to join.



Franta, attending a training session at the Leadership Forum.

With my new ministry encompassing more of a regional church planting role within Europe, I connected a European church planting network with missionaries and nationals in Portugal who are desiring to grow in their church planting training within their own Portuguese culture. The Portuguese are desiring to begin a network of assessing, training, and coaching within the city of Lisbon among like-minded church planters who desire to develop, empower, and release national disciple makers.

I am grateful to the leadership and members at Grace for their faithful investment in European nationals by their prayer and finances, as well as support of our ministry so that we might develop, empower, and release European nationals into God's harvest fields.

—Ritch Trca

The budget of the Missions Committee operates solely from designated giving, and not from the general offering. In order to support the Grace Evangelical Missions outreach, you need to mark your offering envelope with the specific amount you wish to go to MISSIONS. God has richly blessed our church and the missions giving has always been very good. Please join with us in making certain that you designate a portion of your giving to MISSIONS. Let's see where the Lord leads us and how we can expand the outreach of Grace Evangelical Church.

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Vacation Bible School, 2015

Photos by Lea Spence.



Birthdays & Anniversaries

AUGUST

- 8/03 Gabriel Moxley
- 8/04 Brent Smith
- 8/05 Steve Conlin
- 8/06 George Manley
- 8/06 Brady New
- 8/09 Devin Patterson
- 8/09 Gary McCabe
- 8/10 Randy Greb
- 8/11 Matthew Smith
- 8/12 Paula Dale
- 8/12 Venessa Hendricks
- 8/15 Sandra Dodson
- 8/19 Liliana Georgen
- 8/20 Lindsey Lawlis
- 8/21 Rick Bishop
- 8/23 Wanda Cooney
- 8/23 Amy Jo Lambrecht
- 8/26 Rich Witmer
- 8/26 Hannah Esteb
- 8/29 Kari Jo Doerksen
- 8/29 Donna Huff

ANNIVERSARIES

- 8/03 Brady & Kristen New
- 8/03 Adam & Holly Phoenix
- 8/09 Bill & Janet Simpson
- 8/11 A J & Angel Hillebrand
- 8/19 Larry & Cheryl Dilk
- 8/22 Steve & Pam Farrar
- 8/22 Ed & Char Urban
- 8/23 Gary & Cheryl McCabe
- 8/24 Brent & Venessa Hendricks
- 8/25 Don & Barb Andry
- 8/29 Kyle & Liz Black



Evan and Mackenzie Doerksen won first prize in the dessert contest at the church picnic.