

# GRACE *and Truth*

Celebrating 25 Years  
**GRACE**†  
1992-2017

Grace Evangelical Church  
5905 East Southport Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46237  
317-859-8008  
www.indygrace.org

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

**August, 2017**



## **Reflecting, Refreshing, and Rejoicing**

by **W. Ryan Steenburg**

*“As we look back, let us also learn to look forward. Let us rejoice in what He will do in us, through us, and in spite of us.”*

Twenty-five years ago two churches merged to form one local body of believers on the southeast side of Indianapolis. At the time, the area of Southport Road, right off of exit 103 on I-65, was fairly undeveloped. There was no Home Depot, Target, or Meijer grocery store. The “little church on the hill” was surrounded by a lot of corn fields and open land that we likely take for granted today in 2017. It’s amazing to think of what can happen in the span of 25 years. Not only did the city expand its borders and begin to grow up around the corner of Southport Road and Emerson Avenue, but much was being done within the local body of believers known as Grace Evangelical Church.

Since the beginning of Grace, our purpose has always been to glorify God. We articulated back in 1992 that we would strive to do this through the faithful preaching and teaching of God’s Word, fellowship and discipleship, spiritually strong families, weekly prayer and worship, and by encouraging believers to share the good news of Jesus Christ. Twenty-five years later our purpose remains the same and our methods are steadfast in the Word of God.

As Grace has been faithful to glorify God, God has been faithful to broadcast His love around the world. With over a dozen missionaries sent out from our congregation and numerous others sent into pastoral ministry, Grace has been blessed to be a part of God’s kingdom work all around this planet. We have been through many highs and many lows as a church family, but God’s faithfulness overshadows all of our perceived fortunes and missteps.

In Ephesians 4:11-14, Paul exhorted the church that their purpose was to strive for an on-going building up of the body of Christ. One of the greatest take-aways from this passage is that we will forever be striving for this build-

ing up until we are at home in glory. I say this is “great” because it removes from us the pressure of ever arriving, while still emphasizing the responsibility to remain active in our love for each other. It also offers the hope and promise that God is still at work, and will continue to work as we are faithfully obedient to Him.

Paul closed his second letter to the Corinthians with the declaration, “Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice.” (2 Corinthians 13:11) Think on that word “finally” for a moment. After everything that the Corinthians had been through and after everything that Paul had exhorted, corrected, or rebuked, he said “rejoice.” I think Paul understood that the life of a Christian, or a church, would be full of ups and downs but that this did not remove the capacity or compulsion to rejoice. If anything, it likely provides the foundation for rejoicing, not aside from the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Included in his exhortation is the reminder to aim for restoration and comfort, to live in peace, and, ulti-

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**Built in 1989 at 6829 South Emerson Avenue, this was Grace’s first church building. It quickly became too small, and in 2001 the building at our present location was started. The little church on the hill and several acres surrounding it were sold and torn down to make way for retail space.**

**Visit our website at [www.indygrace.org](http://www.indygrace.org)**

# Sunday Morning DiscipleLIFE Classes

## TELL SOMEONE: YOU CAN SHARE THE GOOD NEWS

Have you shared the Gospel of Jesus Christ with anyone before? Have you ever wanted to share but weren't quite sure how to go about it? Maybe you share regularly and are looking for more tools to put in your toolbox. If any of these apply to you, then this class may be for you! It is based on the book **Tell Someone – You Can Share the Good News** by Greg Laurie. *Taught by Michael Smith and Brent Hendricks in room 112/113.*

## THE BOOK OF DANIEL

One of the most remarkable books in all of the Bible is that of Daniel. The purpose of this book is to provide an historical account of how the Lord protected and provided for Daniel and His other faithful followers while in captivity. It also includes a vision of future redemption and hope. *Taught by Steve Agal and Rick Storm in room 109/110.*

## ABIDING IN JESUS

*A class geared for teenagers.*

Inspired by John 15, this study teaches that abiding in Jesus leads to trusting Him in all life's situations and bearing spiritual fruit in Him. The study features interactive teaching with small group discussion, application, prayer, and fellowship time. All middle school and high school students are welcome to attend. Parents are encouraged to participate too. *This class is taught in room 115.*



## DISCIPLELIFE: CHILDREN'S WING

The Children's Wing uses the **Answers in Genesis** curriculum during the DiscipleLIFE hour. Nursery (birth to 2 years of age) is in room 108. Fantastic Foxes (3 years to 5 years of age) meet in room 103, and elementary grades meet in room 101/102.

# Servant's Heart Congratulates Grace

by Bill Boone

From all of us at Servant's Heart we want to congratulate the Grace congregation for 25 years of ministry on Indy's south side!

God drew my wife Paula and I to Grace in April of 2002. Little did we know what the future held for us at Grace! In November of 2001, God revealed to us a need to feed people and then He placed us here at Grace. We met several couples who embraced what we did at Thanksgiving and Christmas to meet the needs of families for the holidays.

As our bond grew with these new couples, God was leading us to do something about feeding families all year round. In the spring of 2003, Bill Belcher and I traveled to several food pantries that were feeding people weekly. Several more folks heard what was happening with the possibility of a new ministry and wanted to help. This was when our first board of directors was formed. We took some of the ideas from those pantries we visited and decided to step out in faith and officially launch the ministry of Servant's Heart in August of 2003. We served our first client, Amy, right in the middle of the café area here at Grace. We didn't have much to offer but God knew it was just what

Amy needed to help her family.

Now here we are fourteen years later and God has used us to serve over 7,000 families! For the past several years we have touched over 10,000 lives each year. None of this would have been possible without the encouragement of the folks of Grace. Paula and I thank you for loving us then and now. We are including some pictures of that first client and those early days.

God is using us to make a difference in people's lives. If you would love to help us be the hands and feet of Jesus, we have lots of opportunities to serve, be part of a pantry team, grocery gathering team, financial pantry partner and furniture team.

In closing, I just want to share one testimony. Last Saturday we were very short-staffed, both in the office and the warehouse. When we circle to pray before we open, we always pray for opportunities to witness. Lately we have seen answers to prior prayer requests and it is awesome when the clients share that with us. But this  
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**Amy, Servant's Heart's first client.**



**Rose Hartman gives a haircut to a Servant's Heart client.**

**GRACE AND TRUTH Newsletter Editors:**  
Jennifer Wilkerson  
and Janet Simpson ..... newsletter@indygrace.org

**Grace Evangelical Church Office Staff:**  
W. Ryan Steenburg, Senior Pastor ..... ryan@indygrace.org  
Dick Witmer, Pastor to Seniors, Emeritus ..... dick@indygrace.org  
Keli Handy, Secretary ..... keli@indygrace.org

# Home Groups: Friendship and Fellowship

by Jennifer Yao

*“Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” – Hebrews 10:24-25, ESV*

While the above verse certainly applies to attending worship service on Sundays, this also applies to fellowshiping with brothers and sisters in Christ in smaller, more intimate settings like home groups or Bible studies. On Sundays it is too easy to be in and out of the service with the barest of glances and waves to friends. If you are like us with young kids, we often rush into service harried, and then at the end of service are in a hurry to round up the kids and get them home, fed, and down for a nap. It is only in separate meetings with fellow believers during the week that we get a chance to stretch our spiritual muscles and apply ourselves to the exercises that we learned about in the Sunday sermon. It is not enough to just know we must serve God and love each other; we must live it out in the community.

As much as we know the spiritual importance of fellowship, it is very easy to fall into “neglecting to meet together.” For our family, our spirit was often willing but our flesh was weak as we dealt with a constant revolving door of illness, our children’s unique sensory issues, the stress of work, and the general busyness of raising two young children. So when Pastor Ryan first approached Joel in December of 2015 about helping to co-lead a home group with the Conlins, our first impulse was to politely decline. But thankfully, we prayed about it and by God’s providence, decided to step out in faith and see what would come of it.

One and a half years later we are so thankful that we said yes. We moved to Indiana almost eleven years ago, and it is only in the past year that we have felt like we have finally started to put down roots and get to know others on a deeper level. Home group has played a crucial role in laying down those roots and feeling connected to others.

A friend from our college church in Michigan once said, “Church brings together people who otherwise would have no business being together; it is only the common purpose and love of Christ that brings us together.” This is just as true today for us as it was back in Michigan. Here in Indy, our home group has been (and is) an eclectic mix of people with different backgrounds, ages, personalities, and vocations. When we first started meeting together, most of us were almost complete strangers but now...

We are FRIENDS who know each other’s victories and struggles.

We are FRIENDS who call/email/text each other to see how they are doing during especially challenging times.

We are FRIENDS who pray for each other and lift each other up when the other person is too weak and weary.

In short, we are FRIENDS who strive to “stir up one another to love and good works.”

Of course, everything is not always happy and smooth sailing. If we are being honest, there are many weeks where we are drained mentally and physically from life, and



The Yao Home Group meets every other Friday night.

we just want to “chill” (or collapse) on the couch by ourselves instead of getting the house ready and prepping for Bible study. But unfailingly, after the last person has left and the last stray toy or crumb is picked up, we are thankful that we did it. Sometimes I liken it to exercise, which I am not naturally inclined to do. Making the time to host and lead a home group requires work and some sacrifice, but afterward we are inevitably glad we did it and feel a deep sense of “Shalom.” It is also a way of recalibrating our minds and reminding ourselves that God, and striving to grow together in our relationship with Him, is more important than our “to do list” or the other earthly things that too often weigh on our minds. Fellowship in home group fills a deep, inner hunger in our souls that we often experience but don’t realize, or instead seek to fill in earthly, fallible ways.

If you are at a point in life where it is difficult to meet with others due to physical limitations or other challenges, please do not give up or become discouraged and defeated. Just keep praying, and when God provides an opportunity – whatever that may be – take that step (or leap as it may be) of faith to deeper friendship and fellowship.

## OUR HOME GROUP: THE FORMAT

Our home group meets every other Friday from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (or later). We can have as many as 17 children and 10 adults. As you can imagine, we found it challenging to have deeper discussions when the kids were with us the entire time, so we tailored our format accordingly. This is just what we found that works for our group with our demographic and dynamics, but each group will have its unique personality and way of doing things. Our format is as follows:

- Two praise songs – everyone enjoys this, but the kids especially do!
- A short Bible story/lesson for the children – they are invited to listen, respond to questions, and then pray; after this they are dismissed to play.
- For the adults – share prayer requests, pray, and then read the Bible passage and discuss the week’s sermon.
- Snacks and fellowship together.

## Reflecting, Refreshing, and Rejoicing

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mately, to honor God through our love.

So, let's rejoice. Let's rejoice in who God is and the grace that His Son poured out on the cross. Let's rejoice at the promise that He will come again and will take us home to a place which He has prepared for us. Let us rejoice in the pruning, the growing, the discipline, and the testimony to Christ's love that all of this provides. As we look back, let us also learn to look forward. Let us rejoice in what He will do in us, through us, and in spite of us. For God is good, and His steadfast love endures forever.

While on a missions trip to Thailand, an Irish contemporary Christian band called "Bluetree" composed the song, *God of This City*. The opening lines of this song declare, "You're the God of this city, You're the King of this people, You're the Lord of this nation, You are." In addition to other wonderful lyrics, the chorus rings with, "Greater things have yet to come, and greater things are still to be done in this city." I believe this. I believe this for Indianapolis and for Grace Evangelical Church. I believe that we should not only reflect and remember all the wonderful things that God has done in this city and in our church over the past 25 years, but also wait with great anticipation for what He still is going to do, whether that be through the next 25 years, or beyond. As we strive to glorify Him, God will do great things. I'm excited about the journey!



## AUGUST

8/03 Gabriel Moxley  
 8/03 Laura Garcia  
 8/05 Steve Conlin  
 8/06 George Manley  
 8/07 Lilly Dugger  
 8/09 Gary McCabe  
 8/12 Paula Dale  
 8/12 Venessa Hendricks  
 8/18 James Miller  
 8/19 Liliana Georgen  
 8/21 Rick Bishop  
 8/23 Wanda Cooney  
 8/24 Aiden Phoenix  
 8/25 Levi Delk  
 8/26 Rich Witmer  
 8/26 Olivia Steenburg

## ANNIVERSARIES

8/03 Adam & Holly Phoenix  
 8/03 Robert & Suzette Griggs  
 8/09 Bill & Janet Simpson  
 8/19 Larry & Cheryl Dilk  
 8/22 Steve & Pam Farrar  
 8/22 Edward & Char Urban  
 8/23 Gary & Cheryl McCabe  
 8/24 Brent & Venessa Hendricks

*"Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." – Matthew 5:16*

## News From the Children's Department

by Holly Phoenix

The Children's Department would like to add a second class during second hour this fall, and we are looking for teachers and helpers for this class. If you are interested in helping, contact me at [holly@indygrace.org](mailto:holly@indygrace.org).

We have decided not to promote kids to new classes at this time. All classes will stay the same for right now. If you have any questions or concerns about this, please let me know.

There will be a children's ministry training on Saturday, September 9, from 10:00-12:00. All parents of small children, current children's department volunteers, and those considering helping in the children's department are encouraged to attend. More information to come.

## Servant's Heart Congratulates Grace

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week, one of the clients had picked up an outdated *Daily Bread* which was in the lobby and started reading it as she patiently waited to be served. As I was checking in folks she asked me "What is a Prodigal Son?" Everyone in the lobby was listening to my response. I shared with her that it was a child who demanded the inheritance of his parents to spend, and how the story didn't have a good ending for the young man, but eventually he came back begging to his father, and the father rejoiced that his son had come home, accepting the son unconditionally.

The Holy Spirit was touching the hearts of those in the lobby. It was extremely quiet during the telling of the Prodigal Son. I closed by saying that God is waiting for us to come back to him with open arms. I got emotional and so did she. It's just priceless when God gives us opportunities to sow His seed. Will you come and work in the field with us?

Contact us at [info@servantsheartofindy.org](mailto:info@servantsheartofindy.org), or call 317-788-9433 for more information or to volunteer.



Servant's Heart's first Thanksgiving was held in the cafe at Grace.