

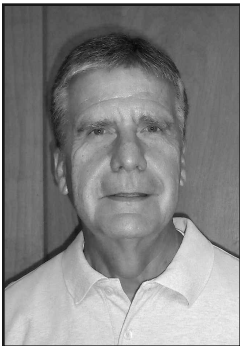
GRACE *and Truth*

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

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

July, 2017



What Can You Say About 25 Years?

by **Bill Simpson**
25th Anniversary Coordinator

"I hope you'll spend some time with us to celebrate on the last weekend in July ... It's a time to acquaint, reunite and rejoice!"

Our 25th Anniversary Celebration is almost upon us and as it gets closer, I've been thinking about what it means to me.

What can you say about 25 years? When thinking about my own life, that seems like a smaller parcel of time than it used to be. But then you call it a quarter century and it seems so staggering. Yet the time frame seems less significant than what's been going on here.

What do we see from those first formative days in 1992? I believe a lot that is visible, namely a functional yet beautiful church building sitting on one of the area's most visible sites. Then think also about the resources that have been ours to invest and the people who were willing to put effort behind the things that God provided.

Going back 25 years, who would have "thunk" it? Well, undoubtedly the early leaders did! They had the vision and prayerfully committed to the Almighty what they were trying to do together.

And now here we are – that big 25 years later with true "Generations in Ministry." How so? Well, think about it ... the adults who walked through the doors, caught the enthusiasm, and became leaders. Or how about the people from Grace who quit their jobs and headed out to full time ministry, or the several children who grew up at Grace and became missionaries. All of this has had a profound effect on hundreds of people who have called Grace home.

Remember now, this is just in the first 25 years – what may the Lord have ahead in the next 25? Moreover, are we in position to listen to His calling? Only each of us can really answer that. Our prayer is that we can be as ready as He is.

I hope you'll spend some time with us to celebrate on the last weekend in July – not to celebrate all that we've done – but what has been accomplished here only through Divine guidance. It's a time to reacquaint, reunite and rejoice! Moreover, we have been highlighting this anniversary since the beginning of the year with an anniversary logo, special announcements, a new photo directory, newsletter articles, banners outside, and now it all comes down to the big party.

Our plans include a fellowship dinner under the tent on Saturday, July 29 for all of our members featuring entertainment and reminiscing. We will continue to celebrate also on Sunday morning at worship, and it's not just for the current members. Scores of invitations are rolling out and we truly hope that the many who have grown spiritually here will return to be with us. May His blessing be upon us as we celebrate His glory!



Dave and Sandy Weston visited us from Frankfurt, Germany last month. Dave has started a new campaign called "More Than Meets the Eye" which helps support the refugees pouring into Europe from war-torn countries. Grace supports the Westons through our Missions Ministry as they endeavor to reach Europeans for Christ. Pictured are (left to right) Cindy Bannon, Sandy Weston, Dave Weston and Dave Bannon.

Visit our website at 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.*

1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS

Sometimes considered Paul's eschatological letters, 1st and 2nd Thessalonians extensively discusses the second coming of Christ. In both of these letters, Paul writes to encourage the believers in Thessalonica to provide guidance on godly living and to reassure the believers about the return of Christ. *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.

Women's Ministry Update

by Bunny Conlin

Women's Ministry Statement:

At Grace, the Women's Ministry exists to encourage each woman to know and follow God's Word, serving God and others so that each woman's life will glorify God in her sphere of influence, incorporating the concepts of Titus 2:3-5.

Women's Ministry meetings are open to all women and are usually held on Monday evenings. Watch for meeting announcements in the church bulletin.

Women's Ministry endeavors to:

- bring together women of all ages and stages;
- ensure that women are equipped to live life, serve in a ministry, and remember a world beyond themselves; and
- leave a spiritual legacy for the next generation.

In keeping with these goals, Grace Women's Ministry offers the following fellowship and ministry opportunities.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study is for women of all ages and meets each successive Tuesday morning at Grace from 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. for the duration of the study with breaks between studies. A variety of books of the Bible

have been studied, with the most recent being **Lies Women Believe** by Nancy Leigh DeMoss. Plans are to study Proverbs this summer using Dee Brestin's **A Woman of Wisdom**. Sign up on the Women's Ministry board in the hall next to the office. Contact Jo Witmer at jowitmer-1978@gmail.com or Bunny Conlin at conlins2@att.net for more information.

Young Women's Study is for freshmen through junior years of high school (ages 15-17). The girls are currently studying **Authentic Beauty** by Leslie Ludy. This study meets from 6:30 until 8:30 p.m. at the home of Wanda Cooney. Usual meeting times are every other Friday evening. Carolyn Abby is the leader and contact of this group and can be reached at cabby97@yahoo.com.

Women's Prayer Group is open to all women and meets on Thursday mornings from 10:30 a.m. until noon. The location changes, so contact Cheryl McCabe at mccabe@gmail.com if interested in attending. Join this group to pray for the men of our church, our country, and personal requests.

Breakfast Club is a small group but is open to all women and meets on the first Thursday of each month at 6:45 a.m. at Cracker Barrel, 4350 East Southport Road. This group is ideal for those who have an early morning schedule. For more information, contact Tricia Sparks at triciasparks7@gmail.com.

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

A Tale of Two Churches, Part 3



by Jennifer Wilkerson

For the last few months, we've been covering the history of Grace Evangelical Church in preparation for our 25th Anniversary Celebration. This month our story continues starting with the year 2005 ...

In the year 2005, more changes were in store as Grace once again held two services with the intent of leaving adequate space in each to help visitors feel welcome. The Sunday School classes then became known as Adult Bible Fellowships because they were offered twice as well. And the Women's Ministry assumed the acronym of "WINGS" (Women In Need of God's Strength). Sadly, as a result of more women working outside the home, it proved difficult to find enough leaders to keep the MOPS program running at Grace. The mothers who had attended were encouraged to attend the Bible study on Tuesday mornings. On a positive note, a ministry that teaches young girls interpretive dancing called One49 Dance Research Program was founded by a member of Grace and blessed occasional services, as well as performing in the community.

The next year saw the first of many hog roasts, held at the Greenwood Airport, to benefit Grace On Wings, the nation's only charity air ambulance service.

In 2007, Grace installed playground equipment in a highly visible section of its parking lot with the intent of encouraging outreach to the surrounding community. Fundraising with the help of Meijer and designated offerings (including those from the children themselves!) provided for this special project. About a year later another important acquisition was gained – that of the corner lot bordered by Arlington Avenue and Southport Road. The owner, Mae Lowes, had passed away at the age of 103, and owning this adjoining property ensured that no new construction would happen on it. And Pastor Bryan had an especially meaningful year when on Veteran's Day he was promoted to Brigadier General, assistant to the Chief of Chaplains.

In the next few years outreach opportunities to the children in the community were especially effective! The EGGstravaganza, VBS, and Family Funfest drew a total of about 625 people NOT from Grace through its front doors. At least two children accepted Christ as their Savior at the Funfest which had games, a bounce house, cake walks, music and a professional Christian entertainer! And Grace had its first "Fall Festival," another outreach featuring not only a visit from a lifeline helicopter, but the Chick-fil-A cow! The evangelizing continued as Pastor Gary traveled to India with other pastors, where highlights of this missions trip were meeting the child he and Sharon sponsored, praying with the natives and dedicating new church buildings.

Another outreach ministry that has proved to be very rewarding and fun to many Grace members of all ages over

the years is "Operation Christmas Child," where shoeboxes are wrapped and filled with various items such as toys, hygiene items and candy. These are then shipped all over the world after a Gospel booklet is added to each one. Many children are reached for Christ this way.

A year of new beginnings was in store for both the men and women of Grace with the arrival of 2010! Based on a desire to share homemaking skills among the older and younger women of the church, the "Titus 2" ministry was founded. Pastor Bryan began the "Hungry Hunters" based on the premise that men are hunters and gatherers, and are responsible to hunt in the Word of God for answers to life and should be hungry for God's Word as the only satisfying meat in life into which they can chew and be nourished.

The men's and women's ministries weren't the only ones with new beginnings – the nursery was experiencing a population explosion! Plans were made and carried out to accommodate all these new lives. Record numbers were also seen at the EGGstravaganza that same year as over 300 children came to hunt for eggs. This time a total of over 600 were in attendance and it was standing room only for the Gospel presentation given before the hunt.

One ministry that Grace has supported over the years is Ariel Ministries, whose mission is to evangelize Jewish people and to disciple Jewish and Gentile believers through intensive Bible teaching. Its founder and director, Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum, has been a much-loved speaker at Grace.

The year 2012 was a time of change for Grace as Pastor Gary and several families left to plant a new church, Connections Church of Franklin, Indiana. And a special tribute was held to celebrate Pastor Dick Witmer as he retired from his "Pastor to the Seniors" and leader of the OWLS role. Also, a brand new daycare ministry called Noah's Ark was founded that gave Grace members opportunities to enroll their children and to apply for employment before it was opened to the community as an outreach.

More transitions were ahead in the next few years as Gabe Doerksen came from serving in a church in Michigan to become the Pastor of Worship and Arts, and Pastor Bryan retired after many years of faithful service. Steve Agal became the interim pastor and a search committee was formed. After Ryan Steenburg and his family of eight came from Louisville, Kentucky in early 2015 to meet Grace's congregation, he candidated and was voted in on April 26th. In 2016, Gabe Doerksen and his family followed God's calling on their lives to a church in Wisconsin.

Many Grace members have participated in Servant's Heart, a local ministry that evangelizes and provides help to needy southeast side families in the form of food, clothing and furniture. A highlight every year is their "Turkey Drive Thru" where hundreds receive a complete Thanksgiving meal. Wheeler Mission also reaches out with a mission to indigent individuals by offering not only shelter and food but encouragement to return to employment. Grace has helped them raise funds and donate gifts for those struggling with

(Continued on page 4)

Life Centers – Because Life Matters



Grace is happy to support Life Centers which provides compassionate support to thousands of women and families in pregnancy-related situations in Central Indiana each year. Life Centers' mission is simple – to save babies and reach others for Christ so He can transform their lives.

Nearly half of all pregnancies in America are unintended. One in five pregnancies ends in abortion and over 10,000 abortions occur in Indiana each year. In America, one baby is aborted every 24 seconds! Over 45 million abortions have occurred since Roe v. Wade in 1973.

Life Centers has ten locations in or near the Indianapolis area and provides free services for the following:

- confidential peer counseling;
- pregnancy tests;
- ultrasounds;
- accurate information on abortion risks and alternatives;
- a 24 hour Help Line;
- maternity support items (diapers, bottles, clothes, toys, furniture, etc.);
- Bibles and Gospel outreach;
- G.R.A.C.E. post-abortion support groups; and

- Referrals for medical services, financial resources, and adoption.

SHRHONDA'S STORY ...

"I was going through a tough time, and I was considering abortion. I was lost, I was homeless, and I was living out of my car during the wintertime," Shrhonda said.

She visited Life Centers where a peer counselor educated her on all the options. In addition, Shrhonda had an ultrasound that allowed her to see her child and hear the heartbeat. The ultrasound technician told her, "You know, God knew us before we were in the womb. He knows your son." Shrhonda says that's when she decided to keep her child.

Since choosing life for her son, with the help of Life Centers, Shrhonda has earned her associate degree in ministry and co-owns a growing daycare business.

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. We pray that everyone regularly attending Grace will give to the Missions Ministry so that 100% of those who call Grace their home church will be participating in our church mission program.

Finding Grace ...

To celebrate Grace's 25 year anniversary, we'll be printing testimonies from YOU each month in this column. If you have one to share, please send it to newsletter@indygrace.org.



by Pam Farrar

Around 1994, our family moved to the south side and I remember the things that attracted us to Grace were the centrality of the Word, the genuineness of worship, and a vibrant children's ministry – one that eventually led to an outreach of a childcare ministry. In addition, Grace has an emphasis on missions, something near to the heart of the Lord.

Many of the ministries at Grace were outreaches to various groups or individuals. One of the ministries I enjoy is the many facets of women's ministry – retreats, Bible studies (both daytime and evening), and my personal favorite – the mentorship program. Ministry in small groups and one on one has been very rewarding for those who minister as well as those receiving ministry. And finally, the men's ministry at Grace was involved not only with discipleship, Bible study, and accountability, but also ministered to a severely mentally ill young man.

A church, as the Body of Christ, encounters many and varied persons in need of ministry. Grace has been that for many these last 25 years!

A TALE OF TWO CHURCHES, PART 3 (Continued from page 3)

the effects of homelessness. Another important ministry is the one of encouraging young women to "choose life" for their unborn baby. Life Centers has eight locations scattered throughout Indianapolis and counsel many with the goal of reaching them for the Lord. GEC as a whole assists in raising funds for this important ministry, and members volunteer their time as counselors.

In the 25 years Grace has been in existence, it has blessed the community surrounding it with its many outreaches, trained its attenders with solid Bible teaching to encourage laymen to be testimonies in their sphere of influence, launched and supported countless missionaries, encouraged many ministries here and abroad, and sent volunteers to countries including India, Poland, Germany, the Ukraine, Prague, and Italy. May the next 25 years continue in this fashion!



JULY

- 7/03 Anna Sudler
- 7/04 Connie Moxley
- 7/04 Isaac Abbey
- 7/06 Nita Butler
- 7/09 LuAnn Young
- 7/11 Jack Craven
- 7/13 Steve Agal
- 7/15 Rick Storm
- 7/15 Janet Agal
- 7/17 Ken Collyear
- 7/23 Josh Johnson
- 7/30 Aryiana Dugger

ANNIVERSARIES

- 7/10 Pastor Dick & Pat Witmer
- 7/17 Gary & Beth Johnson
- 7/19 Doug & Ruth Decker