

# GRACE Insider

*making disciples*



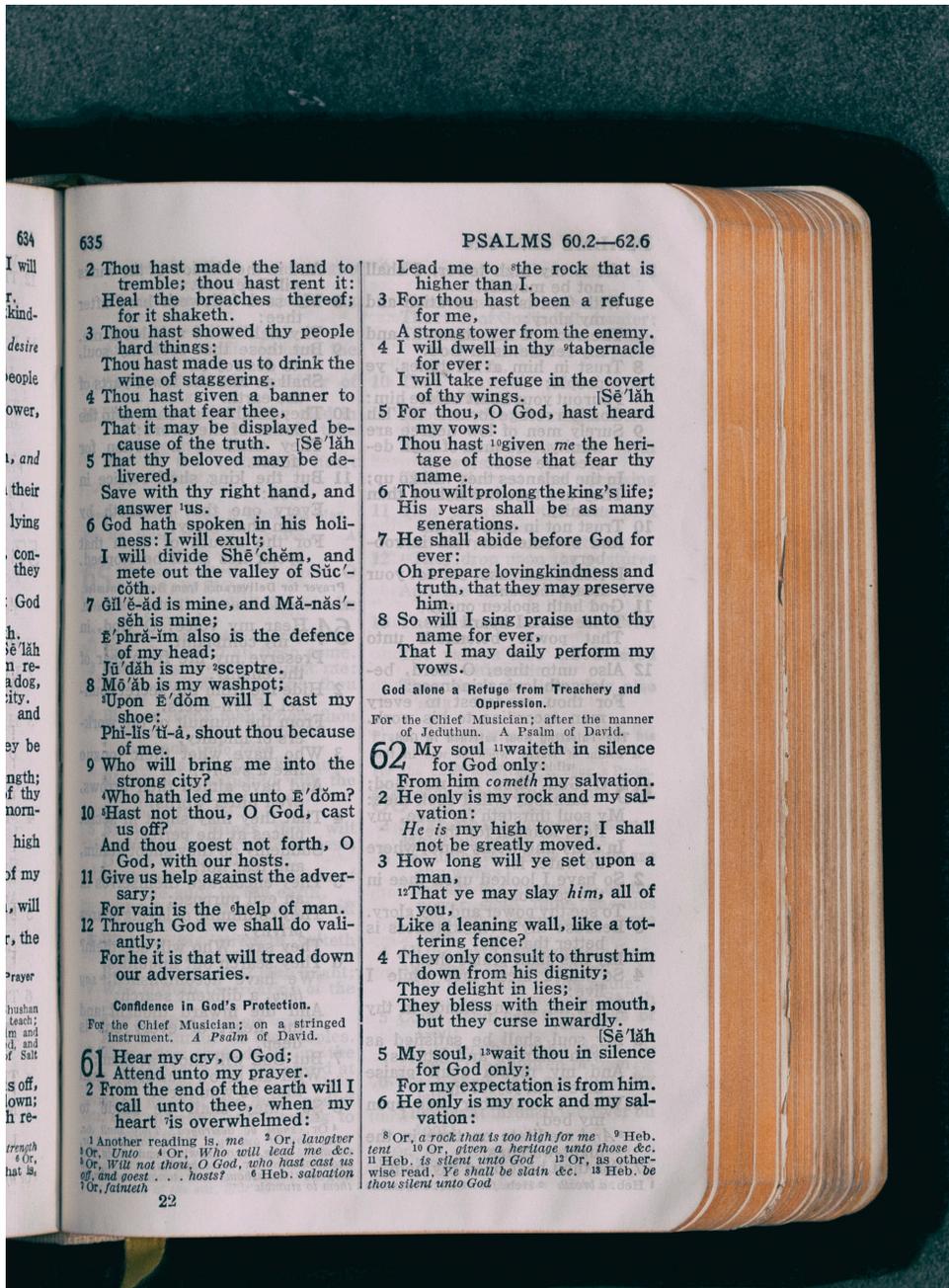
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Easter 2020

*Celebrating Our Unshakable Hope*

Featured on pg. 6

/april



# EXTINGUISHING THE WILDFIRE OF WORRY

by Aimee Marino

## We're walking through an unsettling time.

Anxiety is at best a mild hum in the back of our minds and at worst a blinding panic. Christ-follower, our hope is not in the times, not in the news, not in a vaccine or a return to normality. We are held fast in Christ and Christ alone. This is a beautiful truth, and can be difficult to trust right now.

While you are working to care for your own health, others' health and your family's needs, we want to make sure your heart is cared for, too. Soon, we'll be launching bite-sized soul care videos to give practical, biblical steps for where you find yourself right now. Here's a preview of what's to come: first steps to help us turn from fear and to the Prince of Peace, the Good Shepherd, and the Living Water who extinguishes the sparks of worry.

### PSALMS 60.2—62.6

2 Thou hast made the land to tremble; thou hast rent it: Heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh.

3 Thou hast showed thy people hard things: Thou hast made us to drink the wine of staggering.

4 Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, That it may be displayed because of the truth. [Sê lāh

5 That thy beloved may be delivered, Save with thy right hand, and answer us.

6 God hath spoken in his holiness: I will exult; I will divide Shē chēm, and mete out the valley of Sūc-cōth.

7 Gīl 'ē-ād is mine, and Mā-nās'-sēh is mine; E'phrā-im also is the defence of my head; Ju'dāh is my 'sceptre.

8 Mō'āb is my washpot; Upon E'dōm will I cast my shoe: Phi-lis'ti-ā, shout thou because of me.

9 Who will bring me into the strong city? Who hath led me unto E'dōm? Hast not thou, O God, cast us off? And thou goest not forth, O God, with our hosts.

11 Give us help against the adversary; For vain is the help of man. Through God we shall do valiantly; For he it is that will tread down our adversaries.

Confidence in God's Protection.  
For the Chief Musician; on a stringed instrument. A Psalm of David.

61 Hear my cry, O God; Attend unto my prayer. 2 From the end of the earth will I call unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed:

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

3 For thou hast been a refuge for me, A strong tower from the enemy.

4 I will dwell in thy tabernacle for ever: I will take refuge in the covert of thy wings. [Sê lāh

5 For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: Thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name.

6 Thou wilt prolong the king's life; His years shall be as many generations.

7 He shall abide before God for ever: Oh prepare lovingkindness and truth, that they may preserve him.

8 So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, That I may daily perform my vows.

God alone a Refuge from Treachery and Oppression.  
For the Chief Musician; after the manner of Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.

62 My soul waiteth in silence for God only: From him cometh my salvation.

2 He only is my rock and my salvation: He is my high tower; I shall not be greatly moved.

3 How long will ye set upon a man, That ye may slay him, all of you, Like a leaning wall, like a tottering fence?

4 They only consult to thrust him down from his dignity; They delight in lies; They bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. [Sê lāh

5 My soul, wait thou in silence for God only; For my expectation is from him.

6 He only is my rock and my salvation:

<sup>1</sup> Another reading is, *me*. <sup>2</sup> Or, *lawgiver*.  
<sup>3</sup> Or, *unto*. <sup>4</sup> Or, *Who will lead me &c.*  
<sup>5</sup> Or, *Will not thou, O God, who hast cast us off, and goest . . . hosts?* <sup>6</sup> Heb. *salvation*  
<sup>7</sup> Or, *fainteth*

<sup>8</sup> Or, *a rock that is too high for me*. <sup>9</sup> Heb. *tent*. <sup>10</sup> Or, *given a heritage unto those &c.*  
<sup>11</sup> Heb. *is silent unto God*. <sup>12</sup> Or, *as otherwise read, Ye shall be slain &c.* <sup>13</sup> Heb. *be thou silent unto God*

# EXTINGUISHING THE WILDFIRE OF WORRY

## FIRST STEPS TOWARD PEACE:

*Take a moment to calibrate your soul to serve and worship the One True God of Peace*

### 1. Trade the illusion of control for actual impact: Pray.

*(Phil 4:4-7, Jn. 14:13-14)*

Worry is false control. The sooner we realize this, the sooner we can turn to the God who *IS* in control, confessing our powerlessness and concerns to the one who has power to act. Stop and pray now over what is on your mind and heart.

### 2. Be intentional with what you're taking in.

*(Prov. 4:23, Phil. 4:8)*

When stress squeezes us like a kitchen sponge, what comes out will be what we have absorbed from our surroundings: either panic or praise. Consider limiting media (news, online, social, podcast, etc.) as an active way to practice trusting the God who takes care of the world.

### 3. Embrace biblical community.

*(Hebrews 10:25)*

Quarantine doesn't mean isolation. Now is the time to band together in Christ, proclaiming the hope of the Gospel to one another across phone lines and text messages, video chats and snail mail until we can gather again.

### 4. Seek and meet the needs of others.

*(Mark 10:45)*

When we move our gaze off of ourselves, our perspective broadens and aligns more closely with reality (versus the worst-case-fear-scenario). When we serve and love others, we are "walking the walk" of belief that God will provide for us.

### 5. Let your needs be known.

*(Romans 12:5, James 4:6)*

It takes trust to humbly ask for help as we need it. God often provides through His family—other believers, and we are free in Him to humble ourselves, acknowledge that we are not self-sufficient, and ask for help.

### 6. Above all, Church, remember...

If you are IN CHRIST, nothing of true value can be taken away from you. Your spirit, your future, your hope—all of these are secure in the God who took on your plague of sin and endured death that you need not fear its grip.

Take a moment to calibrate your soul to serve and worship the One True God of Peace. Then, move forward in trust, dear believer, knowing that you are His.

# CELEBRATING OUR UNSHAKABLE HOPE

by Pastor Brooks Simpson

## Easter Sunday 2020

Life seems simpler when you know what to expect. Last month we took for granted that we would all continue with the normal routine we have been accustomed to for as long as we can remember. We have routines for family, work, friends, church, etc. What do you do when what you were used to is yanked out from under you like a rug?

Our typical routine for Easter Sunday is predictable and joyous. There is always a sense of anticipation on Easter. You know what you are celebrating and you can somewhat predict

### THE HOPE OF THE RESURRECTED CHRIST IS AN UNSHAKABLE HOPE.

and anticipate the experience. If you are a part of Grace Community Church, you know there will be limited seating at the service so you carefully choose which service to attend, as we always add a service, or make accommodations at a larger venue. On Easter you probably show up on time to make sure you get a place to sit. The worship music is inspiring. The Spirit is present and the preaching reminds you of why

you are celebrating – Jesus is risen and He has conquered sin and the grave.

But what if your Easter is not filled with the routine you are used to? What if the events make for an uncertain Sunday morning where what you were looking forward to and what you expected are no longer reality? Due to the coronavirus pandemic this year's Easter Service will give us an opportunity to experience in part what the first disciples experienced that first Easter Sunday.

The first followers of Jesus did not wake up excited to gather and worship with the community. They were afraid and uncertain about their future. Before Jesus' execution they thought their new normal would be ruling with Jesus in the kingdom of God. When they watched Jesus die their dreams died with Him. That Easter morning they huddled together in their homes afraid to go into the streets for fear the same fate that befell Jesus would befall them. This Easter you may find yourself in the same place as the first disciples on Easter morning—huddled up with

# THE GREATEST VICTORY IS ALREADY WON

your family, friends, or maybe alone wondering if it's safe to go outside. If you are afraid, know this—the disciples were too. Uncertainty always carries with it fear of the unknown. There is much we cannot know about the future, but let the reality of His resurrection fill your heart with the certainty of Jesus' triumph over sin and death.

That first Easter morning began with darkness, fear, and uncertainty. Then as the sun came up and word began to spread concerning the empty tomb. Fear became curiosity. Curiosity became longing. Longing became hope. Hope in the resurrected Christ who conquered sin and death. The resurrection reminds us where our hope should be found.

- THE HOPE OF GOOD HEALTH IS A VAIN HOPE.
- THE HOPE OF A GOOD ECONOMY IS A VAIN HOPE.
- THE HOPE OF A STABLE NATION IS A VAIN HOPE.
- THE HOPE OF THE RESURRECTED CHRIST IS AN UNSHAKABLE HOPE.

### 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 (ESV)

<sup>13</sup> But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. <sup>15</sup> For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Encourage one another with these words! He is risen.

- Pastor Brooks

# A MID-WEEK SERMON

by Pastor Jason Blackley

## Sexual Ethics—Part 2

Due to our desire to speak to the needs of our congregation and world, the elders of Grace determined that we would interrupt our sermon series through the book of 1 Thessalonians. Due to this change, we were not able to preach Part 2 of our sermon on Sexual Immorality which Paul addresses in Chapter 4. Therefore, we have recorded Part 2 separately and it's accessible on-demand in the Grace phone app or Graceb3.org where you normally access our sermon audio/video.

In that sermon, I laid out a few action steps for us as a church to fight sexual immortality in our own lives, and also how to love those that do, or have in the past.

### For our own lives:

1. Find our satisfaction in Christ
2. Run to the good Father in repentance
3. Walk in the light
  - a. Join a community group
  - b. Join a Conquerer-Series purity group  
*(fill out a PDI at [graceb3.org/counseling/getcounseling](http://graceb3.org/counseling/getcounseling) and say you were referred by this sermon, *Sexual Ethics—Part 2*)*
4. Walk in the power and freedom of the Spirit
  - a. After the build re-opens, check out our resource shelves in North Liberty and [ccef.org](http://ccef.org)

### How do we live as “good news people” for others:

1. Learn, share, believe, and live the gospel.
2. Identify the mess, sin, and immorality in your own heart.
3. Allow others to come to Jesus and community with their mess.

Check out the full sermon audio, video and PowerPoint on [graceb3.org](http://graceb3.org) for more information on this topic.

# SERMON FORECAST FOR APRIL

## 1 Thessalonians 3:6–10 (ESV)

<sup>6</sup>But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love and reported that you always remember us kindly and long to see us, as we long to see you—<sup>7</sup>for this reason, brothers, in all our distress and affliction we have been comforted about you through your faith. <sup>8</sup>For now we live, if you are standing fast in the Lord. <sup>9</sup>For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God, <sup>10</sup>as we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith?

### April 5

1 Thessalonians 4:9-12  
*Brotherly Love*

### April 19

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11  
*The Lord's Coming*

### April 12 (Easter)

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18  
*Resurrection Hope*

### April 26

1 Thessalonians 5:12-15  
*Gospel Community*

Paul could not be face to face with the Thessalonians for a while, and we can't either. Regardless, we will continue to endeavor to encourage one another with God's word. Coronavirus has thrown all of our routines up in the air. The preaching of God's word is one thing that the coronavirus will not disrupt. April gets us back full swing into 1 Thessalonians. Our objective is to become Good News People. Believing and applying the gospel will help us become just that – Good News People. Take a look at the text

and themes for each Sunday in April. Its *almost* as if the Holy Spirit knew we would need those themes in the thick of an uncertain future. There is no *almost* about it. That's how our God works and His word is sufficient to supply us and encourage us for any trial we will face. God has foreordained this time for us for His glory and our good. His word will equip us to stand fast in the same way it did for the church in Thessalonica. Be encouraged. God's word is sufficient and His purpose will prevail. *This is Good News, People.*

# SEARCHING FOR BEDROCK

by Pastor Tarryl Bockelman

In the past few weeks, God has been teaching me about humility and prayer. I wish I could say the result is an increase in humility and an amazing prayer life. Hopefully, that will come someday soon. But for right now it seems to be more about process, and how humility and prayer are so closely linked.

At the time of this writing, (early March) a large part of the world is in melt-down over the coronavirus. People are rushing to grab whatever they can from stores (especially toilet paper for some reason) to prepare for

*What I thought was immovable, obviously was not.*

a future that no one can predict. Businesses, schools, and life as we know it is in flux. The institutions and routines that we assumed were stable seem to be largely in disarray. That interruption is causing fear and instability, but it is also producing some deep reflection about variables we thought were constant.

It reminds me of the first earthquake I experienced while living in southern California. I was in a vehicle stopped at a

stop light and didn't feel the tremor as much as I actually saw it. The asphalt roadway was doing a slow roll as it approached, kind of like a gentle ocean wave. For a few seconds my brain could not process what I was seeing. From experience I was used to almost everything on the planet being subject to movement, but not the ground itself. It took me a few seconds to realize what was happening. What I thought was immovable, obviously was not.

After regaining my equilibrium, I was struck by the same truth our current struggle with the coronavirus is illustrating—we are fragile, finite beings who, in the end, control very little of our existence and the things we think are constant really aren't. Thanks to God, we are blessed with an amazing amount of grace that allows this planet to exist in exactly the correct position in the universe to support life. That life is supported by an incredible balance of nature that feeds and sustains us. At the same time our immune system protects us from an onslaught of bacteria and viruses that would terrify us if we



could see them all. And yet we often stumble through life thinking things will not change, and that somehow we are in control. And even though we may intellectually agree that we are mortal, we live as if even death doesn't apply to us.

At the end of the day, this whole viral threat has been a humbling experience. My plans for the future, whether they had to do with family, church or retirement, are not the constant I thought they were. At first glance it seems this should be unsettling, but for some reason it's bringing a sense of peace instead. I wonder if that's because my perception is being pushed more into line with what is reality—what is true. We should not be attached to this physical

world and the deception of its constancy. This will all be done away with and only what is eternal will remain. By the time you read this, we will probably know whether this event is closer to calamity or hyperbole. But regardless of where this threat ends up, hopefully we will be more in line with the reality of God's sovereignty and our dependency. Ultimately that seems to be where prayer becomes a necessity.

## **2 Corinthians 4:18**

*So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*



## J-LIFE THRIVES IN AFRICA

The Hansen family shares the latest news from their trip ministering with J-Life in Africa.

*Paul—*

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic many of you were faithful to pray for the us as we took part in the J-Life 2020 African Summit in Cape Town, South Africa. There are a number of things to celebrate God doing during this time, and we want to share them with you. Here's Amy to give you a report:

*Amy—*

I need to give a disclaimer—I didn't want to go to Africa. Just being candid. Paul has loved Africa for a very long time, and I've been thrilled for him, but I couldn't share that love as I had never been there. Don't get me wrong; I love Africa's children—deeply. I work with them in ELL, and my own kids go to school with them. But me? Go to Africa? Not a chance until I'm old and my kids are grown, I used to think. Yet God had better plans for me, as He always does. His plans for each of us often include twists and turns we never saw coming,

but end up being life-changing blessings we would never trade later. Such was our trip to Africa. I can't imagine a more significant blessing at a more timely stage in my life. Paul and I and two of our kids (Emma and Caleb) were so incredibly honored to be an extension of Grace Community to our brothers and sisters there. Each of you who prayed for us had a part in that! Thank you.

In short, J-Life Africa is thriving!! The conference we attended was the 2020 J-Life African Summit in Cape Town, South Africa. There were 56 delegates from 22 African countries, the United Kingdom, and the US. We were all hosted in different homes across the city of Cape Town, and joined together daily for vision, prayer, strategic planning, training, marriage-enrichment workshops, small-group soul care for one another, worship, and lots of love and laughter. This was the first summit that included the wives

of the African leaders, which was incredibly strengthening for their marriages and ministries, not to mention a deep blessing to each of the wives. My time with the wives was very impactful in my own life as we got into the word, shared laughs and tears, and prayed over one another. Soul care at it's finest.

As expected, we learned more from our African friends than they could from us. One of the miracles of the Holy Spirit is that He can take believers from completely different cultures and can use them to penetrate each others' hearts as He desires. God used them to take us deeper in the area of prayerful dependence. When do these people NOT pray?? They were praying constantly—in large groups, small groups, individually, fasting and praying, over and under everything until all things were weaved together in prayerful dependence. Perhaps that explains the joy they radiate in the midst of suffering, the power they experience as God moves in

their ministries, and the deep love expressed in their unity (laughter and hugs all day!). We came home continuing to delve deeper into prayerful dependence ourselves—may that never change.

Paul and I had the privilege of leading a workshop on parenting, focusing on raising godly children as a team in our marriage. We were amazed at the commonality of parenting themes and challenges across the cultures! We shared from the book of Nehemiah when each Israelite had to strengthen the wall nearest his own house, with a weapon in one hand and a working tool in the other. We made it interactive so there was quite a bit of fun and sharing going on. We are humbled that God used it and we received many thanks from them. J-Life is committed to developing leaders who can then influence and assist the churches with disciple-making in their country of Africa. They commissioned five additional country leaders at the summit.



Country leaders include precious believers like Michael, who grew up Muslim but was drawn to Christ through a dream that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. After growing in his faith, his own family sought to kill him, and Michael ended up running for his life. Now Michael and his wife are blessing churches in Tanzania as they train them to be disciples who make disciples.

Another example is Samson, a country leader in Ethiopia. Samson grew up in a Coptic church but never heard the gospel. He took a challenge from his friends to find out what the Bible says, and started in Romans. He couldn't get past Chapter 3. He just kept reading Romans 1-3 over and over as it answered his question of how to be right with God. He received Christ, shared with his friends who received Christ, who couldn't stop sharing the gospel until they were kicked out of the Coptic church. He now has a network of churches who recently baptized 500 people in a river, with 1,000 more baptisms coming in the

next month. As J-Life thrives, they continue to determine how to become more effective. Their vision for 2030 includes growing 2,000 more African leaders and have 200 gateway cities in 40 countries. Please continue to pray for God's blessing, fruitful ministry, protection, and boldness for J-Life Africa!!

A powerful experience for me was when, during worship, we would all sing the same song together, but in different languages. At one point I couldn't sing anymore, I was so touched by the sound of different cultures all raising their voices in unity to the same amazing Lord. I just stood in the beauty of the moment. It felt so close to Heaven, and I can't wait to experience it there! So....as you can probably guess by now...I love Africa. I thank God for having different plans for me. A part of my heart is still there. And if I ever turn up missing....I think you should check Cape Town first.

Thank you for praying!  
Paul, Amy, Emma, and Caleb



# ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

## — 2020 REPORT —

**Editor's Note (3/26/20):** Much of the information our budget forecasts, and in this report, was prepared and compiled prior to the shifts taking place due to COVID-19. Subsequently, it does not address how our budget might change in the future given our current season. In the coming weeks and months we will continue to reassess our strategic budget plans for FY 20-21, making sure our financial planning is consistent with our ministry efforts, the needs of the congregation, and our community. We will strive to maintain visibility throughout this process, so significant budget modifications will be communicated to the church body.

Greetings, family and friends of Grace Community! Welcome to our first online annual report. We acknowledge we live in challenging times, but we also know our Lord promises us grace equal to the challenge and greater than all our sins. That's still VERY good news!

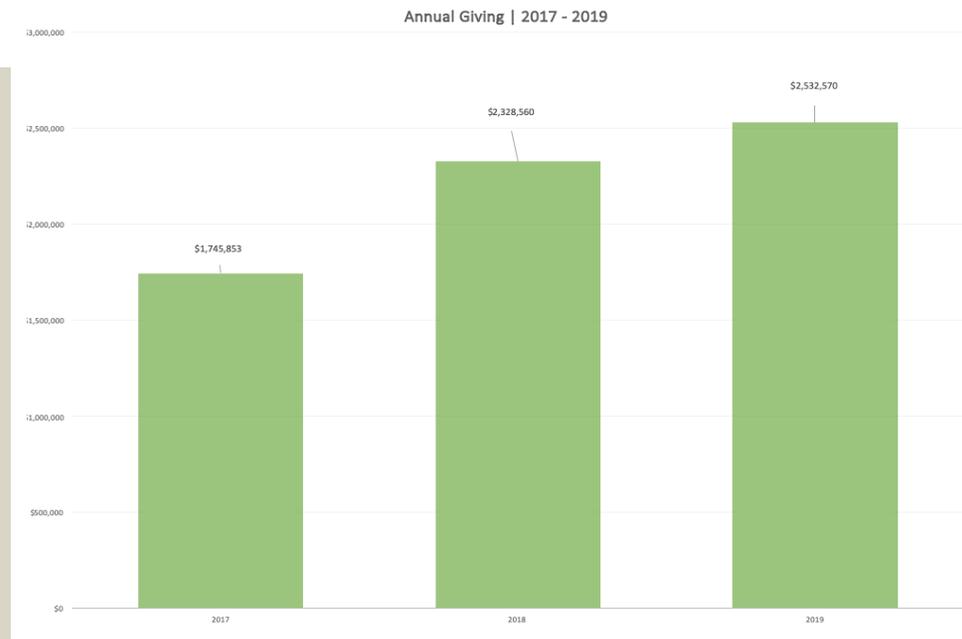
It has been a very significant year where we have continued to move ahead as a congregation in effectively preparing for our next exciting season of ministry. We will share some past success while looking forward to effectively mobilizing the church to spread the gospel in word and deed to everyone in Johnson County and beyond for the sake of making disciples who make disciples of all the nations.

This report has been prepared for you by the members of the Financial Review Committee, or FRC. The FRC is a group

of Grace Community Church members who are commissioned by the Elder Board to serve under the Executive Pastor to ensure integrity within the church's financial dealings. The FRC is co-chaired by Tony Luneckas and Pastor Paul Hansen. Serving alongside them are Joe Abdo, James Ankrum, Charlie Damschen, Brian Mueller, and Caleb Stamp.

### Closing Out Fiscal Year 2019-2020

The Momentum initiative that we kicked off in the fall of 2018 has been great for the health of the finances at Grace. Instead of just barely breaking even with revenue and expenses each year, we've been able to expand what we're doing in our regular operations, missional outreach, and saving for the future. The current financial summary, included on the Annual Business Meeting web page, shows a net income of \$0 for this



fiscal year. That's because the actual net income of \$571,241 has been put in as the amount set aside to save for future facility needs. Since October 2018, we have saved \$1,270,000 for a new building, and we are adding to that amount each month.

Even though it looks like we will come in about \$500,000 short of our \$6.8M goal for Momentum, we continue to see fruit in the area of finances in the lives of those at Grace. Not all fruit has a dollar value. 553 of you responded to the call to share, serve, and give during Momentum and 330 of you became new givers since Momentum began. We continue to trust in God's timing and provision regarding the next steps for our facility, in order to bring in, build up, and branch out to more people.

### Budgeting for Fiscal Year 2020-2021

Grace's budget process begins long before the kickoff of the "budget season." Spending is reviewed every month by the FRC to assist church leadership in maintaining spending versus the approved annual budget. Planning for the upcoming fiscal year begins in mid-October with each director and department head reviewing the current budget and entering proposed amounts per line item for the next fiscal year along with a justification for each expense. Department budgets are first reviewed by the Executive Pastor with the director or department head. Then, in January, the FRC meets with each director or

department to review their proposed budget, line by line, so that the FRC can fully understand each request. By March, the FRC finalizes a proposed budget and sends it to the Elder Board for review and final approval.

One of the FRC's roles is to be stewards and keep the budget in line with the mission of Grace Community Church. Every year we try to focus special attention on areas where the Elders feel we need to grow. Often this growth comes in small steps, but small steps are needed to reach big goals. This year we focused on two main areas of improvement:

### **Taking care of our current staff.**

We are in a multi-year process to make our employees' benefits packages competitive with other employers in the area. We started by offering simple IRA contributions a couple of years ago, and this year took a hard look at health expenses. With the rising costs of health insurance and because we wanted to care for our staff, not addressing healthcare was not an option. So this year, we are taking steps to better alleviate the burden of healthcare costs for staff. As further changes to health insurance unfold, we will continually evaluate our options to provide the best care and options.

### **Preparing for a down payment on a North Liberty building project.**

Even though a new building is several years out, we have already trained our budget to save \$36,000 each month to go toward a down payment. In effect, we are 'paying our mortgage' before we even have one, further preparing us for the future in case we need to borrow funds to finance the building project.

Our hope and prayer, with this budget, is that we will be faithful in using the financial resources that God provides for our church. As you look at the budget line items, please pray that the investments the church makes will align with the values given to us in scripture, even if they are investments the world says are foolhardy. Pray also for the gospel ambitions that stand behind those budgeted amounts. Thank you for being a part of the mission of Grace Community Church!

View the 2020-2021 budget and submit your questions online at: [graceb3.org/abm2020](https://graceb3.org/abm2020)

# WAYS TO GIVE

Visit [graceb3.org/give](https://graceb3.org/give) to learn more and sign-up



## › BY TEXT

Send an amount to "84321"



## › ONLINE

[graceb3.org/give](https://graceb3.org/give)



## › BY MAIL

Send to: 2707 Dubuque St. NE  
North Liberty, 52317

# TALENT AT GRACE

Andy and Darlene Morlan



*From Downton Abbey to Guatemala, the Morlans' heart for the nations has taken them to the most unexpected places.*

Andy and Darlene Morlan have been coming to Grace since the 2013, moving from Oxford to Tiffin so they could spend less time in the car and more time with folks. The Morlans are passionate about connecting with people which shows in how they minister to those in their sphere of influence, and the activity of their two sons: Seth is 17 and is active in Christian Youth in Action and Jericho Hills Camp over

the summer. Tyler just turned 12, has a heart for missions, and is the household safety officer. Tyler also serves alongside Pastor Tom Widmer in Missions Club at Grace. Andy and Darlene also desire for others to have thriving marriages, and have hosted small conferences at their home using Paul Tripp marriage conference content and materials.

## MEETING JESUS

The Morlans met Jesus in 2003 (but not at the same time) when Andy's brother invited Andy to 'Walk to Emmaus', a weekend retreat. The gospel was presented, and it was there that Andy started a relationship with Jesus. After seeing the changes in her husband from his decision, Darlene started seeking and praying that God would reveal Himself to her, as He had to Andy. Soon after she had a vivid dream about Jesus and the next day the world looked completely different!

## LIFE AT THE U OF I

Today, Darlene is a Licensed Practical Nurse and has worked at the University of Iowa Dialysis Center for the past seven years. Andy, dubbed 'Aquaman', also works in dialysis ensuring the water used for the process is suitable for patients.

## TO ALL THE NATIONS

The Morlans' passion for missions and witnessing to the nations has led them to interesting places in life—a short-term Haiti mission trip is what first drew them to Grace. And, after the trip, in 2014 they combined their passions of fellowship, cuisine, and missions to host mission dinners as a way to raise awareness and support for short- and long-term missions at Grace. Originally, the idea was kindled from the oddest of places, the PBS hit drama Downton Abbey. While on vacation in the U.K., Andy's mom and niece attended a multi-course meal at the set of Downton—Highclere Castle in north Hampshire. After hearing the story of Highclere's superb experience, Andy immediately



thought, "Hey, we could do that too!"

The Morlans continue to host the five-course mission dinners in support of mission work and field staff, and plan to announce additional dates after the current season of social distancing has passed. As the word has spread, other families within Grace have started their own mission dinners with community members donating ingredients, decorative pieces, and lending a hand to support work in Guatemala, Haiti, and elsewhere around the world.