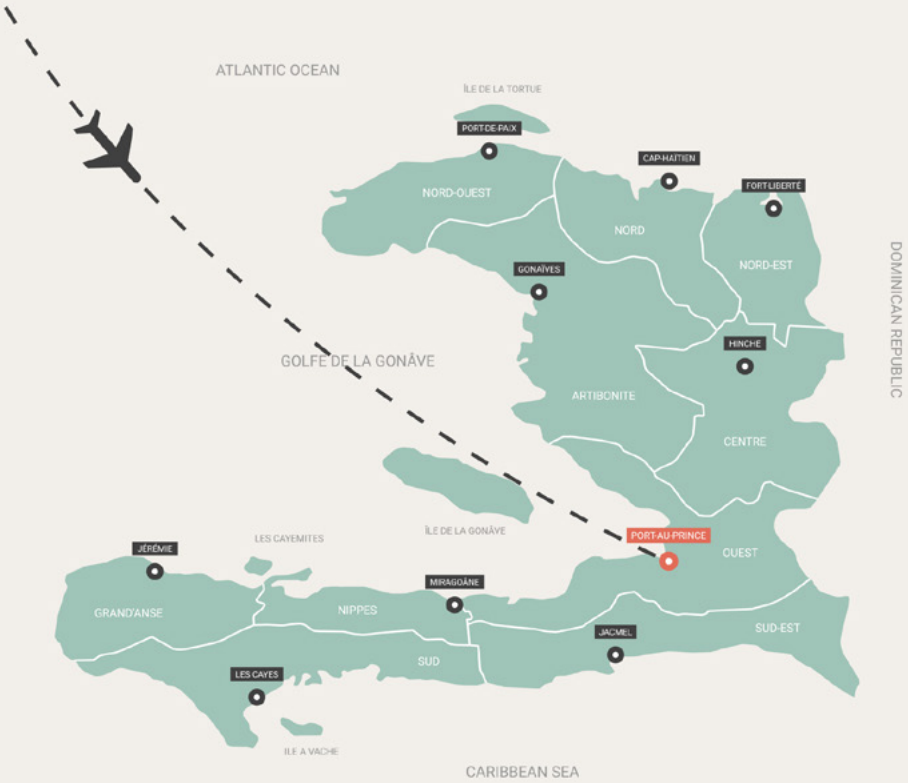


HAITI

Grace Insider | October 2021



GRACE FOR HAITI





4 WAYS TO EXTEND HOSPITALITY THIS THANKSGIVING

By Wade Summers

When Mohamed chose to follow Jesus, one of the first things he shared with me was the ways God used Christian hospitality.

Mohamed noticed that the Americans who were caring for him and expecting nothing in return had one thing in common: they believed in Jesus. He said if it had just been me, he could have written me off as an anomaly, but so many Christians were selflessly caring for international students, there must be something different about Jesus.

As Mohamed continued to share with me each stage of his journey to Jesus, it reminded me of John 4. In the story, the Samaritan town needed the invitation of the Samaritan woman to come and encounter Jesus. Her invitation was the bridge that allowed them to come and see who Jesus was. In much the same way, our cumulative hospitality and welcome were a bridge for Mohamed.

Mohamed told me that Christian hospitality and welcome helped him move from a place of distrust to trust with Christians. It helped move him from a slight curiosity about what Christians believed to seeing that the words of Jesus applied to him and then finally to a place where he needed to know if the teachings of Jesus were true. The story in John 4 ends with the Samaritan town telling the Samaritan woman that they no longer believe because of what she shared, but because they heard for themselves. I felt Mohamed was telling me something similar.

He didn't believe Jesus because of the love of Christians, but it was the love of Christians that helped him get to a place where he could see who Jesus is for himself.

Fatima, on the other hand, had a different encounter.

She came to the US hoping to become friends with Americans. She spent the next two years attending classes at the University of Iowa, but instead of finding friends, she found loneliness. She felt invisible in her classes, and her heart was beginning to become hard to both America and Christians.

The University of Iowa enrolled 2509 international students last fall. That's 2509 opportunities to extend hospitality to those who are thousands of miles away from home. *We have a choice: are we going to be a bridge for the nations to encounter Jesus or are we going to let our apathy become a stumbling block?*

Our annual International Student Thanksgiving is the perfect first step to extend hospitality and welcome to the international students in our community.

Two weeks before Thanksgiving, international students will have a chance to enjoy a light version of a Thanksgiving meal in an American home and then come to hear Brooks share about the history of Thanksgiving, its current cultural meaning, and why people would choose to give thanks to God in the midst of suffering. Afterward, we will have time to talk about what Brooks shared over Thanksgiving desserts.

Interested? Here are four ways you can volunteer to make this event happen.

1 **HOST**

Open your home and share a Thanksgiving meal with your international student.

2 **CO-HOST**

Give international students a ride and help host the light Thanksgiving meal.

3 **BRING A DISH**

Make a dessert or help hosts and co-hosts with cooking.

4 **SET UP & TEAR DOWN**

Help with set up and tear down as well as other behind the scene tasks at the North Liberty campus.

To take your next step, sign up here: graceb3.org/thanksgiving 🍂

UPCOMING EVENTS

Learn more and/or sign up for events on graceb3.org/events

SUNDAYS

Fall Thrive Classes • Enrolling now: classes aiming to grow you in various aspects of life.

Sunday Morning Prayer • 7AM • Lift up in prayer the needs of our church, community, and world.

MONDAYS

Men's Bible Study • 6:55PM • Study God's word with other men in the community.

TUESDAYS

Women's Bible Study • 7PM • Zoom • Sign up at graceb3.org/events • *Morning session is also available, see below.*

WEDNESDAYS

Refill, hosted by Grace Student Ministry • 6:30PM • Equipping 7th-12th graders to love God, serve others, and make disciples of Jesus.

10/3 • 2PM • Zoom

Campus Ministry Prayer Meeting • Lift up in prayers the needs of our campus ministry.

10/4

Searching for Answers Devotional Begins • Sign-up by texting "answers" to 94253

10/10 • 9:15AM

Membership Class • Learn how you can join us on our mission to glorify God by being and making disciples who make disciples.

10/17 • 11AM

Field Staff Prayer Meeting • Support our local field staff through prayers with fellow brothers & sisters in Christ.

10/31 • 9:30AM

Baby Dedication Class • Equipping parents who wish to dedicate themselves before the church to raise their children in the Lord.

10/31 & 11/7 • 11AM

Baptism Class • Learn the why's, when's, and how's of baptism at Grace. Class is mandatory to be baptised.



By Elder Jeff Thompson

When Grace Began Going to Haiti and the Partnership with WWV

Grace started sending semiannual, week-long, medical mission trips to Haiti in the Fall of 2013. After an earthquake hit Haiti in 2010, Grace looked for opportunities to serve Haiti. We partnered with the charity “World Wide Village” (WWV). The leadership chose WWV because some members of Grace had ties to WWV and it is a non-government agency that has been in Haiti for years. WWV has ongoing ministries in Haiti and provides short-term missions

a guesthouse, transportation, logistics, and advice.

When WWV began ministering in Haiti, they asked the pastors in the villages of Luly and Williamson what their greatest need was. They said medical care. Grace leaders decided to treat the whole person on these trips: helping the Haitians both spiritually and physically. Every trip so far has had two teams: a medical team and a d-team. The medical team consists of doctors, nurses, physician assistants, dentists, or anyone with medical training. They

provide the medical care when we hold clinics in the villages of Luly and Williamson. The “d-team” is a group of volunteers who do most of the discipleship. In the clinics, the d-team members do triage on the patients: they collect information from the patients like a normal clinic (e.g., where you live, why did you come to the clinic), but they also collect spiritual information. They ask the patients about their spiritual journey, the churches they attend, and if they have a relationship with Jesus. If they are already Christians, we pray with them and provide counsel. If they are not Christians, we ask if we can share about Jesus and what He has meant in our lives. We encourage all the patients to get engaged with a local church.

Ongoing Work in Haiti

Grace has two main spheres of ongoing ministry in Haiti: Child Sponsorship Program and the Pastors' Coalition. Student sponsorship involves the Grace team helping WWV find financial sponsors for the students in schools in Luly and Williamson. Several people within Grace sponsor a student for \$35 a month. The mission team transports gifts from

these sponsors to give to the students during the trip. The team members also help register the children with WWV.

An important ministry, from a leadership point of view, is the Pastors' Coalition. On the Spring trip in 2014, Pastor Dave Kirk asked each member of a team of seven Haitian pastors from the villages to select a team of 12 young men to disciple. The pastors were to pour their lives into these young men. The pastors meet with these men on a regular basis and train them in the ministry.

Grace buys seminary-based training materials in Creole and provides them to the pastor to use to train the men. We also provide the men Bibles in Creole. To help facilitate training, Dave Kirk and Jeff Thompson meet with the pastors once a month on a Skype call. We share a devotional talk, and all the pastors give team reports to each other. We learn from one another how to be better leaders.

Supporting Our Work in Haiti

Sponsor a student in Haiti by signing up at <https://worldwidevillage.org/>
Go on a short-term mission

for Grace. The spring trip is scheduled for the first week in April 2022.

Support the team members prayerfully and financially when they ask in the spring.

Pray for Haiti. In Ephesians 6, the apostle Paul creates a topology – a map – if you will. He ties different aspects of the Christian walk to the different pieces of equipment of a soldier. Paul is giving us a picture of what a Christian should be doing on a day-by-day, moment-by-moment basis. He concludes this illustration with a command to “pray at all times.” Prayer does not have a piece of equipment mapped to it because prayer is foundational. **Only by using prayer are Christians able to deploy the equipment.** This is how we utilize the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, gospel-of-peace shoes, the shield of faith, and sword of the spirit. We cannot be strong Christians without being prayer warriors.

Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, spiritually lost, and is in chaos because of earthquakes, hurricanes, and a very corrupt political system. Our brothers-in-Christ are suffering. As you make “supplication for all saints” as Paul commands us in Ephesians, please keep the following needs of Haiti in mind:

"praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints"
Ephesians 6:18

Pray for the Haitian Political Leaders. In 1 Timothy 2:1-2, Paul exhorts us to pray for leaders, “that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life”. Paul then ties this exhortation to the progress of the gospel in 1 Timothy 2:4, “... who desires all people to be saved.” We can see the truth of this relationship between peaceful government and the progress of the gospel in Haiti.

Haiti is in chaos. The president of Haiti was assassinated on July 7. Furthermore, gangs have pretty much taken over Port-au-Prince because of years of ineffectual government. Later in July, the Haitian pastors made a request for Bibles. I checked with World Wide Village, who is our non-government agency partner in Haiti, to see if they could send Bibles. They responded they could not send anybody to Port-au-Prince to buy Bibles right now because of the threat of gang violence and the instability of the government.

Pray for the Needy of Haiti. Haiti is consistently ranked as the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. The needy are struggling even harder now because of the turmoil: the supply lines for basic goods are cut off or restricted. In Psalm 72, the author prays to God that the king would “give deliverance to the needy.” We canceled the fall mission trip because of the turmoil in Haiti so we cannot help them physically. The best thing we can do right now is to pray for the people in the villages of Luly and Williamson, where we have been setting up clinics, that God will rescue and protect the needy in Haiti.

Pray for the Team of Pastors in Haiti. Hebrews 13:7 reads, “Remember your leaders, those

who spoke to you the word of God.” Please remember the Grace elders, pastors, and the Haitian pastors in your prayers. Grace elders, pastors, and the Haitian pastors have worked together for over seven years in discipling young leaders in Haiti. We have met monthly through Zoom meetings. Grace sends elders and pastors down semiannually. We have trained the pastors in soul care. We have led conferences on biblical leadership with the pastors. We have learned from each other. They are truly our brothers in Christ and need our prayers for wisdom, boldness, and sustenance. Please pray.

If you want to hear more about Haiti or the short-term mission trips, please contact Jeff Thompson, Dave Kirk, or Paul Hansen through the church office at 319-626.2040 or at office@graceb3.org 🌿



DOWNTOWN CAMPUS HIGHLIGHT

By Pastor Jason Blackley

In Iowa City, autumn means more than just the leaves changing.

It also brings a change to our community that is even more tangible. Each fall, some 23,000 undergrads and another 9,000 graduate students, representing over 100 countries, move to or back to town. This provides a unique opportunity for the Downtown congregation of Grace Community Church. We have the opportunity to show hospitality. Many of these students are far from home, or may not even have a sense of home to begin with.

Feeding students, letting them do laundry, and providing them with a gospel community in Iowa City is a great way to demonstrate the good news. By way of God providing meeting space for us at Old Brick in Downtown Iowa City, we also have the opportunity to declare the good news each week right on the campus of the university. Due to the good news we have received, we have the opportunity to demonstrate and declare the good news as we interact with the university culture in Iowa City in our residence, our lab, classroom, or even just out and about.

The fruit of our labor and the



answer to our prayers over the last eight years are being seen each day and week in the Downtown congregation. Our attendance grew each week in August. On August 22, in partnership with One Ancient Hope and Cru, we were able to give away 524 free meals to college freshmen. On August 29, we had over 120 adults attend service, our largest group in a year. We also launched a community group right as school started because one of our groups that meets at Old Brick had grown to 30 adults!

As God does His sanctifying work in us as individuals and

as a church, we pray that God continues to give us opportunities to demonstrate and declare the good news and see the kingdom come in Iowa City! Grace Community Church, thank you for your partnership in the gospel. Please continue to join us in praying that God does a work among us in Iowa City. 🌿

GOOD QUESTION.

By Pastor Brooks Simpson

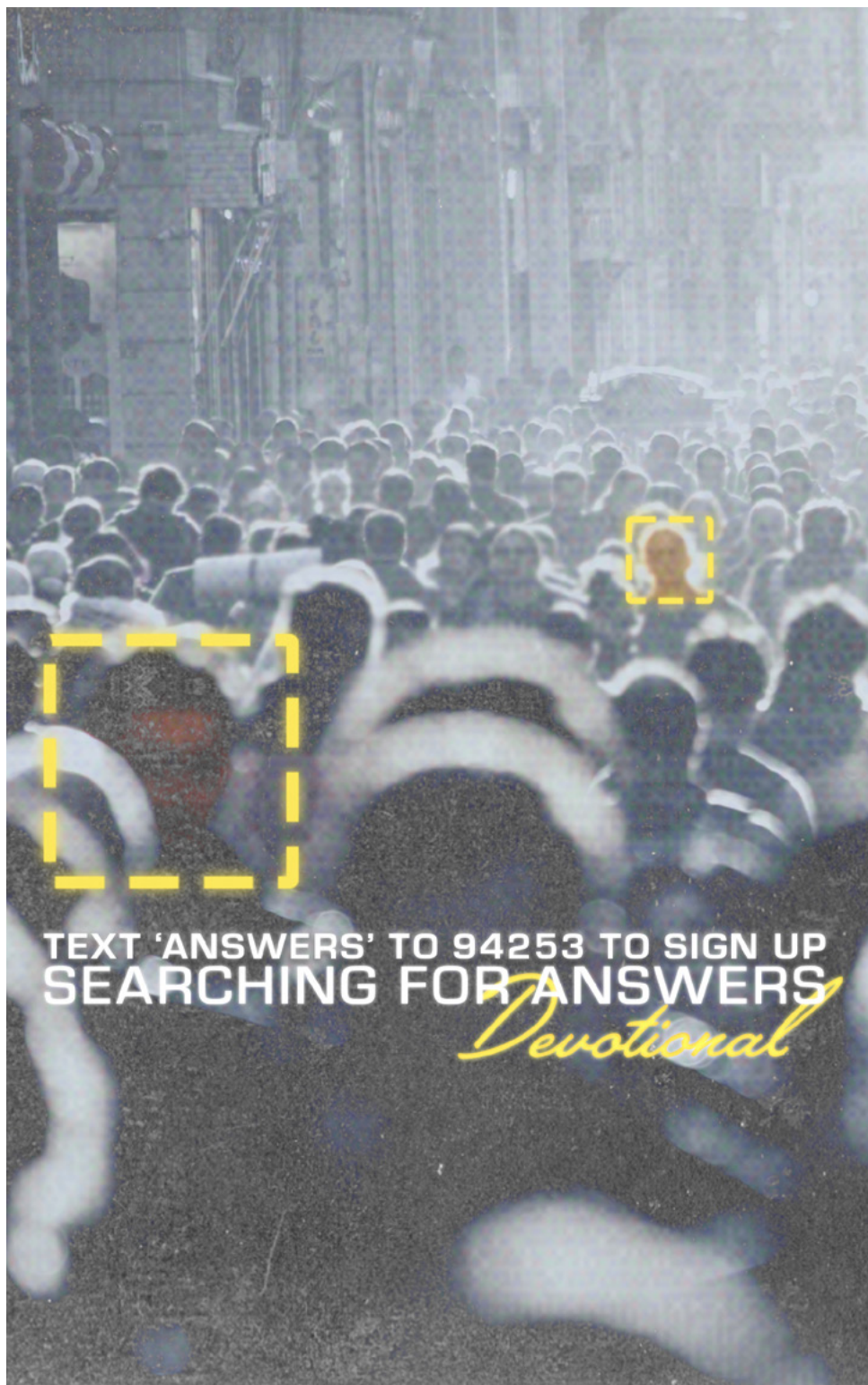
Have you ever felt hesitant to share your faith? Maybe you feel like you need to know the answers BEFORE you can confidently engage in a spiritual conversation. If you view sharing your faith as a task by which you seek to convince the world what they believe is wrong and what you believe is right, you are dead in the water. You will either run people over with truth or avoid discussing the truth. Neither option makes for a good ambassador.

God calls us to love our neighbors by B.L.E.S.S.ing them. BEGIN WITH PRAYER and learn to LISTEN. You don't need to have all the answers to listen. You do, however, need to ask questions.

Each of the five October sermons in the *Searching for Answers: Encounters with Jesus* series is designed to address questions everyone wrestles with at some point.

Sometimes a good question is worth more than a good answer. Os Guinness, in his book, "The Call," describes true seekers as people for whom life, or a part of life, has suddenly become a point of wonder, a question, a problem, or a crisis. Guinness says that seekers disbelieve in what they believed in before because of new questions their previous beliefs could not answer. **Our witness does not cause belief. Our witness stirs questions that only Jesus can answer.**

This month in our sermon series *Searching for Answers*, Jesus will address five questions everyone faces: The question of Evil, Suffering, Death, Power, and Hope.



TEXT 'ANSWERS' TO 94253 TO SIGN UP
SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS

Devotional

WHAT IS EVIL? • October 3 Jesus Encounters the Devil (Matthew 4:1-12): Everyone knows evil when they see it, but not everyone can account for what evil is or how to deal with it. Who do you know that struggles to understand how people – and even they themselves can – think and act terribly?

HOW DO I FACE SUFFERING? • October 10 Jesus Encounters the Sick (Luke 8:40-56): Everyone suffers, but not everyone has a worldview that helps them endure suffering. Who do you know that struggles to make sense of what seems to be the senseless suffering they witness at home and in the world?

HOW DO I FACE DEATH? • October 17 Jesus Encounters the Grieving (John 11): Everyone dies someday, but not everyone has a worldview that allows them to face death with unflinching confidence. Our culture is laboring to protect itself and others from death while simultaneously pretending it isn't inevitable. Who do you know laboring to avoid death but isn't prepared to die?

WHERE DO I FIND POWER? • October 24 Jesus Encounters a Politician (John 18-19): Everyone agrees the world needs to change, but no one seems to have an answer for how to enact lasting change. Who do you know longing for change and is frustrated that change is always promised but never delivered?

WHERE IS HOPE FOUND? • October 31 Jesus Encounters the Hopeless (John 20:1-18): Everyone needs hope, something constant that will not let us down or fail us, but all the things we hope in let us down one by one. Who do you know, disillusioned by life's disappointments, needs hope that will not fade?

Begin with Prayer. Let's ask the Father to open our eyes to see the people He brings across our path wrestling with these questions. Then Listen. Listen to the Spirit's leading and listen to the people you encounter. We don't have to have the answers to all of life's questions. We just have to be willing to introduce people to the one who does - JESUS. 🌿

3 out of 4

PEOPLE WHO COME TO CHURCH ARE INVITED BY A FRIEND.

You are God's ambassador to your neighbors, co-workers, and friends.

If you're not sure how to share the Gospel with others, or how to invite them to church, our 3-part video series "How to Share the Gospel" will give you tools to start sharing Jesus with those around you.

Find the series on our Graceb3 YouTube channel or at graceb3.org/sharethegospel



B.L.E.S.S.

Who will
you

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