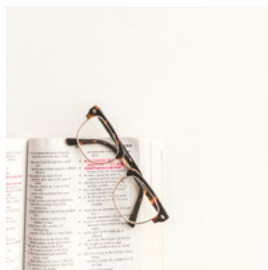
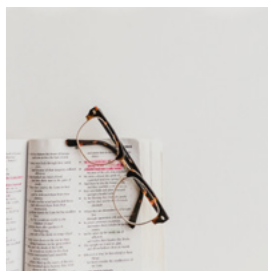


# READING THE PSALMS



*Spring 2022*

# THRIVE

SEE DESCRIPTIONS & REGISTER AT [GRACEB3.ORG/THRIVE](http://GRACEB3.ORG/THRIVE)

**Class Topics:**

Marriage

Evangelism

Premarital  
Counseling

Helping Others  
Biblically

Growing in Your  
New Relationship  
with Christ

Biblical Soul Care

*Classes going on now*



**PLUS:**

## SOUL CARE: WEEKEND EDITION

*A 3-Part Soul Care Training*

When: March 4 & 5, April 8 & 9, May 13 & 14  
Time: Fridays 6-8:45pm & Saturdays 9am-2:45pm

## FAITH & FINANCES: UNDERSTANDING GOD'S ECONOMY

*A 2-Part Financial Stewardship Workshop*

When: Saturday, February 26 & March 26  
Time: 9am - 1pm  
Where: Room 304-305

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Learn more and/or sign up for events on [graceb3.org/events](https://graceb3.org/events)

### Feb 26

**Faith & Finances: Understanding God's Economy** • What does the Bible say about financial stewardship? This 2-part workshop will dive into God's word to understand planning, protecting, investing, and giving what God has given you. Part two of the class is on March 26.

### March 4-5

**Biblical Soul Care: Weekend Edition** • Biblical Soul Care is one of the core classes that Grace offers for building up the disciples of the church to go, to be, and make disciples who make disciples. Until now it's been offered as a 20-week class on Sunday mornings, and that is quite the commitment.

In the spring of 2022, we'll be offering the exact same content but in a drastically different package: during a Friday night and Saturday training over three weekends, one each in March, April, and May. Find out how this class can help you find biblical answers to some of the sticky things that life throws our way.

## CONNECT WITH US

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**"The goal of  
prayer is to be  
with God, or put  
another way,  
to realize that  
because of Christ  
we are always in  
the presence of  
God."**

**LORD TEACH ME  
TO PRAY**

*By Downtown Campus Elder Joe Abdo*

This was the request of Jesus' disciples after ministering with him for a short time. It's also the desire of everyone who loves God, the things of God, and who want to follow the example of Jesus. So, what examples does he give us? He prayed in private and encouraged us to do the same. He prayed in public and warned us not to follow the example of the Pharisees — who prayed to receive the attention of men instead of God. Jesus prayed in times of joy and sorrow, need and abundance.

### **Why do we pray?**

Often it is because (and not until) we are in a place of need; when we are in over our heads. And this is a great reason to pray, like Peter did when he started sinking while walking on the water toward Jesus. "Lord, save me!" He'd left the boat because he wanted to be with Jesus, but was overcome by his fear of the storm.

But there are many more kinds of prayer — praise and adoration, supplication and intercession, confession and repentance, just to name a few. And the goal of all of them is to be in the presence of God through the power of the Holy Spirit. We are always in the presence of God if we are in Christ. Focusing our attention on that by choosing to pray helps us to live that reality in our daily experience.

The goal of prayer is to be with God, or put another way, to realize that because of Christ we are always in the presence of God. Jesus lived his life that way and he calls us to the

same reality. On the night he was betrayed, John observed this about him. “Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper.” (John 13:3)

**The goal of our prayers in whatever form they take is to be in the presence of God, whatever our circumstances.** May our hearts be like David, who prayed in Psalm 63:1-8:

*O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you;  
my soul thirsts for you;  
my flesh faints for you,  
as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.*

*So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,  
beholding your power and glory.  
Because your steadfast love is better than life,  
my lips will praise you.  
So I will bless you as long as I live;  
in your name I will lift up my hands.*

*My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food,  
and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips,  
when I remember you upon my bed,  
and meditate on you in the watches of the night;  
for you have been my help,  
and in the shadow of your wings I will sing for joy.*

*My soul clings to you;  
your right hand upholds me.*





# SOUL CARE

## WEEKEND EDITION

*By Biblical Counseling Director Aimee Marino*

Biblical Soul Care is one of the core classes that Grace offers for building up the disciples of the church to be disciples who make disciples. Until now it's been offered as a 20-week, two-semester class on Sunday mornings... and that is quite the commitment, and not feasible for everyone!

In the spring of 2022, we'll be offering the exact same content but in a drastically different package: during a Friday night and Saturday training over three weekends: one each in March, April, and May.

This class is for everyone who has ever wondered how to help someone who is hurting, losing hope, or struggling with deep-set sin (and it's for everyone that has been there too). Everyone gives counsel (or what we more frequently call "advice"), and as

Jesus' people we are called to give biblical answers to life's questions and problems. This class will get you off to a roaring start on what a biblical answer is to some of the sticky things that life throws our way: from identifying idols in our own hearts, to what the Bible has to say about things like anger, addiction, and depression and more. We live in a world of hurting people, and that has been made even more clear over these tumultuous pandemic years. As followers of Jesus, let's be his hands and feet to care for others – not just their physical needs, but their heart-level needs, in a way that is compassionate, speaks the truth in love, and points the suffering to a Savior. Register now at [graceb3.org/thrive](https://graceb3.org/thrive), and get ready to be trained to do just that. 🌿




# MAKING CHANGES TO OUR FISCAL YEAR

*By Operations Director Caleb Stamp*

Believe it or not, but spring is right around the corner. One of the hallmarks of springtime at Grace has been our annual business meeting that historically takes place at the end of March before the fiscal year begins in April. We've been discussing the possibility of changing the fiscal year to better match ministry planning, and the elders have decided to change our church fiscal year from April 1 - March 31 to July 1 - June 30.

To facilitate this change, we are extending Grace's current fiscal year by three months, so that it ends in June 2022. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Financial Review Committee (FRC) are putting together a budget extension for those three months and will share it with church members once it has been finalized and approved by the Elder Board.





Another result of this change is that the church's annual business meeting will be moved to June, so there will not be a business meeting in this coming March. We will be sharing more details on the June business meeting as we get closer to it.

### **Why change our fiscal year?**

The following reasons reflect why we believe this is a wise change for the church:

Grace's ministry planning closely follows the academic calendar. Having our fiscal year more closely aligned with ministry planning will better synchronize our planning and budgeting processes.

Moving what is typically our largest giving month, December, further to the middle of the fiscal year will ease the uncertainty of how the fiscal year will end, and allow for more flexibility to adjust the budget for the second half of the fiscal year.

January through March is already a busy time for staff without having to put together budget proposals. By shifting the budget process later into the spring SLT members and their teams will be better able to balance their time.

If you have any questions about this change, please feel free to reach out to me at [calebs@graceb3.org](mailto:calebs@graceb3.org) or Pastor Josh at [joshh@graceb3.org](mailto:joshh@graceb3.org). 🌿

# **BEGIN** **(THE MISSION)** **WITH PRAYER**

*By Pastor Paul & Amy Hansen*



Last month we shared in the Insider that Grace has launched a **Global Task Force**. The Global Task Force is the new name for everyone involved in Global Outreach at Grace. We also affirmed that in one way or another: that means you!

Here are some of the program areas of our Global Task Force:

- **Deployment**
- **Care**
- **Prayer**
- **Dispersed People Engagement**
- **Education, Mobilization, and Communication**
- **Local and Short Term Outreach**

Earlier this fall, we encouraged the church to "Begin with Prayer."

We would love you to do that very thing. Grace member Theogene Havugimana is leading our prayer team. He and his dear wife Adela are originally from Rwanda and Botswana. They have four beautiful kids and are anxious to help us move forward in this regard.

The purpose of the prayer team is to provide opportunities and direction in prayer to empower and direct our missional efforts.

**Are you interested in being a part of the prayer team in some way?** Please feel free to email me at paul@graceb3.org with the subject 'prayer team', and we will look forward to working on this together.

Also, don't forget! You can receive our Field Staff's regular prayer emails and updates. If you would like that, simply use the subject line "field staff prayer" and mention which Field Staff you would like to subscribe to!

Until the Whole World Hears,  
Pastor Paul and Amy



# Staff Interview with Downtown Congregation Coordinator *Bo Ties*

*By Communications & Connections Director Jacob Varvel*

Bo Ties has been a long-time member at Grace – since the summer of 2009 – and recently joined the staff team as the Downtown Congregation Coordinator, working with Pastor Jason. I met with downtown’s newest staff member to chat about his new position, what’s going on in the downtown congregation, and how things are going.

**You said you’ve been attending since 2009. What originally drew you to Grace?**

I had just moved to Iowa City for grad school and heard there were two churches that I should check out, one of which was Grace. I visited Grace North Liberty and heard real expository preaching for the first time. I was blown away. I decided that “this is for

me,” and have been attending Grace ever since and have been part of the downtown church since its launch in fall 2013. As a staff member I’m really looking forward to getting to know people more outside of our Sunday interactions and empowering our downtown volunteers.

**What are you passionate about?**

Personally, I’m passionate about music – it’s always been a huge part of my life. I have a doctorate in Piano Performance, but also have a passion for creating music for the church. It has been my mission to teach the church how to lament as part of worship. There’s a huge need for it, and people don’t know how to lament, which ends up not being a great combination. Lamenting is not ignoring the hardships

and realities of life, but instead balancing those hardships in light of the gospel and our current and future hope in Jesus. It's a good way to practice the cycle of redemption. My other interests include baking, house plants, and gardening.

### **So, what does the Downtown Congregation Coordinator do?**

I wear a lot of different hats, including things like scheduling volunteers, empowering people to get things done. The downtown church is in such a unique situation because Old Brick is just a blank space. As tenants, we share the space with many other groups and have to set up and tear down everything we use for services every week. This means there's a lot of behind-the-scenes work to make Sunday services possible.

To outline an average Sunday: set up starts at 2:30pm with our volunteer crew coming in to set up the sound equipment and stage for the band. This includes running all mics, cords, and snake (a consolidated power and input cable) to the soundboard in the back of the room. We also set up our children's ministry area, and wayfinding signage in the building. The music team comes in at 3:30pm for rehearsal and the

service starts at 5:00pm. After service ends at 6:00pm, we need to tear everything down and move it to our on-site storage until the next Sunday. Since we only have two staff, we're fully reliant on volunteers to pull off any sort of service.

I also work on music and oversee the music area, coordinate meals, help the downtown office keep running, and organize everything so it's efficient and logically placed. The last thing we want is for volunteers to be guessing where things are supposed to go. As you can imagine, I use my label maker quite often.

### **Is there anything else you'd like to share about what's going on downtown?**

Yes, the downtown congregation has a meal once a month after service. We've been able to do this in the past by partnering with North Liberty community groups to help with the meals. Since we didn't have meals for a while during COVID, we could use help from our North Liberty community groups to continue putting on meals for downtown students and visitors. If your group is interested in helping, let me know by emailing me at [bot@graceb3.org](mailto:bot@graceb3.org) 🌿

# READING THE PSALMS

*By Executive Pastor Josh Haveman*

For the next three months, we will be reading through the book of Psalms together. Our reading plan is designed to help you build the habit of reading the scriptures. During the first couple of weeks, you will be encouraged to read just one or two psalms each day. Later, we will challenge you to read more, building to about 10-15 minutes spent in the word daily.

We are starting, though, with Psalm 119. Many of you know that this is the longest psalm, and in fact the longest chapter in the Bible. We are starting there because Psalm 119 is different from every other psalm in length, style, and aspiration. Most psalms aspire to address one or two topics. Psalm 119, on the other hand, sets out to address many aspects of a faithful life. It is true that the psalmist who wrote Psalm 119 often returns to the theme of God's law. But there are also references to the struggles of youth, to prayer, to oppression, and to salvation.

Psalm 119 is also a helpful place to start because it is very clearly a poem. All of the psalms are poetic. Most are songs that were written to be sung. Some are more clearly poems of praise or prayer. But as poems, every psalm should be read with certain characteristics in mind.

**First, pay attention to metaphors and other comparisons.**

The psalm writers often use descriptive metaphors to help us understand the significance and meaning. Consider Psalm 119:103 – “How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth.” Here the psalmist



compares the Word of God with sweet honey to get the point across that God's Word isn't just good for us, but that it is also enjoyable! Many other psalms do this as well.

**Second, poems have verses or stanzas.** Even a shorter psalm might have two or three stanzas, and so you shouldn't try to read a psalm like a story. Instead, expect to read it in pieces: looking for different themes, ideas, and descriptions. Psalm 119 is a perfect psalm for developing this habit as it has 22 different stanzas that are all eight verses long. As you read these different stanzas, try to focus on the separate meaning of each section before attempting to figure out how they fit into the larger whole.

**Finally, as you read the psalms, look for repetition.** Hebrew poetry often uses restatement and repetition. It does this to draw attention to certain points or place emphasis on specific ideas. If you're reading through a psalm and think, "this has been said already," you're probably right. Go back and look at the repeated text so that you are clear on the points that have been emphasized.

Spending time in the word of God is one of the core Christian disciplines. If we are going to obey Jesus by teaching disciples to observe his commands, we must know what those commands are. Likewise, if we want to do the will of God, we should understand what he has already communicated in his word. For this season at Grace Community Church, we're going to seek him out in the book of Psalms. 🌿





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