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UPCOMING EVENTS

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

JUNE

Backyard Bible Club • Parents, look for one near you and save a spot for your children at *graceb3.org/bbc*

JUNE 6 • 10:30-11:30AM

Student Ministry Summer Study: Ezra • 7th - 12th graders are invited to this study. When we face pressures in life or feel alone (and who doesn't sometimes?), we need encouragement to trust God's faithfulness to us and to be faithful to him. Join us this summer for this co-ed study of the book of Ezra!

JUNE 9 • 3:30-4:30PM

Student Ministry Summer Class: Faith Foundations • 7th - 12 graders, know what you believe and why you believe it! Faith Foundations is an 11-week summer class. We will discuss and learn basic Christian theology and why it matters in our day-to-day lives.

JUNE 25

Adventureland Trip • 7th-12th graders, join the Student Ministry for our annual trip to Adventureland for a day of fun and fellowship. Register now to reserve your spot.

Seasoned Sisters Road Trip • Women age 50 and up ("Seasoned Sisters") will road trip to Kalona for a few hours of fellowship, fun, shopping, and lunch. Lunch will be provided.

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hen a Christian family senses God calling them to move internationally in order to fulfill his Great Commission (Mt.28:18-20), it can be an exciting time. It is thrilling to step out in faith as a family, experience God's provision, and venture out into the unknown for the sake of others coming to know Jesus. Although the decision to serve in this way may originate with the parents, the children of missionary families are no less impacted by this decision, in fact. they may arguably be more.

To be a missionary kid is truly a life of both blessing and difficulty. You can be treated as a Christian celebrity in one place, and a flight away, you are in a place where no one knows you. You have amazing experiences most kids your age do not, and you miss out on some experiences most kids your age are having. Author Lauren Wells aptly describes the life of a Third

Culture Kid (TCK) as a both/and. Both very good and very hard, both joy and grief, both gaining and losing. It's neither just awesome or just awful. It's both.

Jesus understands this, and is able to walk intimately with missionary kids through the varying seasons they must traverse. Would you please take some time this month during your prayer time to specifically lift up our missionary kids? Perhaps put a reminder in your Bible, your fridge, or your dinner table so that you can consistently lift them up through prayer and bless their life from a world away.

Some ways to pray could include:

Their personal relationship with Jesus - that they would know him, trust him, and be growing in intimacy with him.

Their relationships among their family would be strong, life-giving, and a safe space to process emotions, both good and bad.

That they would see God's blessings on them, their family, and the people they work amongst.

That they would have joy in the mission God has called their family to, and that they would develop a desire to serve God their whole life, no matter where he leads them (or keeps them!).

That they would develop good friends in their new culture - strong and lasting friendships that greatly benefit their lives.

That they would also enjoy a strong connection with significant relationships back home, such as grandparents, cousins, and good friends.

That they would develop a strong identity in who they are and who God has created them to be. That their identity would be anchored even as they become adept at adapting to various cultural settings.

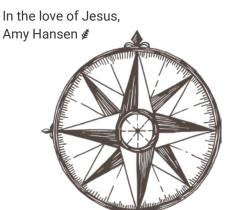
That they would be able to process grief/loss well so that they are not debilitated by it in the future.

That God would give their parents wisdom, insight, and patience in order to support their kids well, while at the same time trying to minister cross-culturally.

That as some of them return to the U.S. for college, God would strategically bless their adjustment and surround them with people who understand and love them.

Thank you for lifting up these precious lives! Even better, could you let them know you have prayed for them? I guarantee that would be one of the "joys" of their life!

PS – Our Field Staff (missionaries) ALL have kids! So there is a lot to pray for. Find them at graceb3.org/people



ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

By Executive Pastor Josh Haveman

n Monday, June 27, 2022, we will hold our annual business meeting. This will be a members-only meeting to review the business of the previous fiscal year and discuss plans for the upcoming year. In the past, this meeting has taken place in March, coinciding with the old fiscal year end of March 31. In 2021 the Elder Board moved the fiscal year end to June 30, and this year's meeting date reflects that change.

All business decisions at Grace Community Church, like the exact dates for our fiscal year, are overseen by a board of elders. The Elder Board is made up of five elders who are not on staff and two elders who are on staff. The five non-staff (lay) elders have voting rights and the authority to make business decisions on behalf of the church. The two staff elders on the Elder Board give input into board decisions but do not have voting rights. Those two men, the Lead Pastor and the Executive Pastor, are charged with carrying out the decisions the Elder Board makes.

The church employs a full-time Business Director who manages the payroll, accounting, taxes, and so on. The Elder Board also relies on advice from a committee of church members known as the Financial Review Committee (FRC) that meets monthly to review financial matters. All of these people – the Elder Board, the Business Director, and the Financial Review Committee – work together to ensure that Grace Community Church is stewarding all of its resources well.

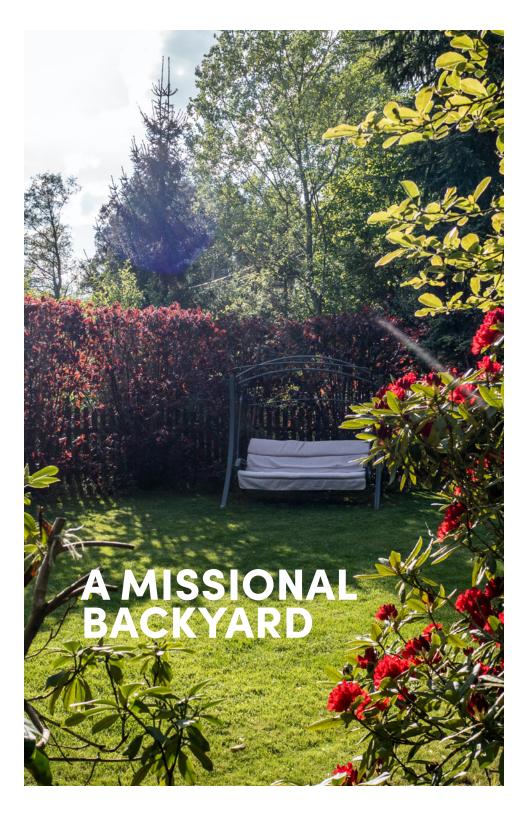
The primary goal of our annual business meeting is to be good stewards by regularly including church members in discussions about church business. About one week prior to the meeting, church members will receive an email with attachments to provide context for them to understand the current financial status of the church as well as details concerning assets, planned repairs, growth and development plans, staffing details and more. The goal is to provide every member with enough information to feel comfortable participating in the conversation that takes place at the annual meeting.

The meeting itself will include a presentation from the Executive Pastor and some short comments from the Elder Board. There will also be significant time allotted for members to ask questions.

The Elder Board and Senior Leadership Team strongly encourage all members to plan to attend this meeting as it's the primary opportunity for church members as a whole to discuss church business with church leaders.

For attenders who are not members, a significant portion of the information shared at the business meeting will be distributed to the congregation over time. We are dedicating two weeks in August to matters of vision, mission, and church direction when we will cover some portions of the business meeting topics.

If you have questions about this article or the upcoming meeting, please contact me at joshh@graceb3.org. &



By Next Gen Director Cindy Sulwer

This article was originally published in June 2021.

or years, Grace organized a Vacation Bible School each summer. Children from all over Iowa City, Coralville, North Liberty, and the surrounding communities would come to the North Liberty campus for one week in July to learn about Jesus and the Bible, memorize verses, and participate in fun activities, games, and more. It was very successful, with over 250 kids coming to VBS at Grace in 2009.

But for several summers leading up to 2010, staff and volunteers had noticed that the children coming to VBS were made up almost exclusively of kids from Grace or other nearby churches. Almost none of the kids were

from the community. After praying about God's will, and how to reach the lost for Christ, they decided to make a radical change. Instead of asking the community to come to Grace, the church would go out into the community to

reach the unreached. "We were seeing that the majority of kids were from Grace. Of course we wanted to offer our families a summer program, but realized we were missing all these kids in our community. We wanted to have a more missional mindset in reaching these children," said

"We wanted to have a more missional mindset in reaching [kids in our community]."

Natasha Miller

Natasha Miller, Elementary Coordinator.

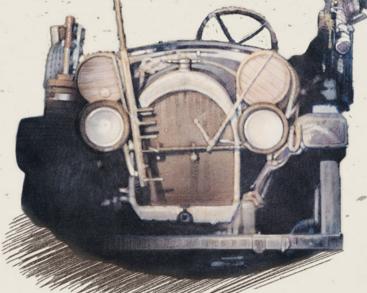
The idea was simple: make the VBS accessible to children down the street by condensing it into a format that could be executed in backyards and parks across the community.

Thus Grace's Backyard Bible Club (BBC) was born. It would still have songs, Bible lessons, games, crafts, all the good stuff kids look forward to, but would be repackaged in a way that's manageable in your own back yard.

Twelve years later, the BBC format is still a relevant and a compelling way to reach families in your neighborhood. Cindy Sulwer, Next Gen Director shared, "while we don't have control of whether the seeds grow, BBC allows us

Seasoned Sisters ROAD TRIP

FELLOWSHIP AND FUN AT SOME OF KALONA'S WELL-KNOWN SPOTS!
SATURDAY JUNE 25 10AM-1PM



Women age 50 and up ("seasoned sisters") will road trip to Kalona for a few hours of fellowship, fun, shopping, and lunch. After lunch, ladies are free to go on their own to the shops in Kalona and/or Stringtown Grocery if they wish.

LOCATIONS:

Maple Avenue Greenhouse / Golden Delight Bakery / Community Country Store Annex / Kalona City Park

TRANSPORTATION:

To carpool, meet at Grace North Liberty at 9:00 AM.

If driving yourself, meet at Maple Ave. Greenhouse at 10:00 AM.

FREE LUNCH:

Provided by Country Cookin' Mobile Food Unit at Kalona City Park

COST:

Lunch is on Grace so all you need is any spending money you may want to bring

to faithfully plant seeds in people who would have never otherwise have heard the gospel." The convenience of local BBCs also increases the likelihood of family participation, "being in the neighborhoods has reached many more people who don't see the value of driving 20 minutes to drop off their child. It's also very convenient for neighborhood parents, some of whom stick around and see the value of BBC for themselves," said Natasha.

This year BBCs will be hosted in North Liberty and in Iowa City, starting in late June and running through the month of July. Grace attenders are encouraged to pray over the requests below for Backyard Bible Clubs leading up to June:

- For the hosts and teams putting on BBCs: endurance, unity, vision for God's kingdom, and reaching their community.
- That God would use BBCs to draw people toward him and reap new believers.
- For good weather, health, and safety for BBC attenders and volunteers.
- That new relationships would be made between Grace attenders and their neighbors.

If you're looking to get connected at Grace, serving at a BBC is an excellent opportunity to meet other Grace attenders. "You're able to serve alongside other Grace attenders, and encourage and connect with each other through serving your community. It's a fantastic way to get connected with others in the church body," said Cindy. If you'd like to help out at a Backyard Bible Club, there are numerous ways to serve and multiple locations available. To learn more, email me at cindys@graceb3.org \noting*

at the Lenck home Every Other Thursday 7-8:30pm sign up at graceb3.org/events





SABBATICAL LESSON #2

By Pastor Brooks Simpson

ne of my objectives while on sabbatical was to hear from God. As I shared in a previous lesson, I adopted a posture of listening. If this sabbatical was going to be an encounter with God and not a glorified vacation, I knew I would need to be intentional. So, in preparing for the sabbatical, I read Mark Comer's The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry, a recommendation from one of our missionaries Alex Ludvicek, and The Spirit of Disciplines by Dallas Willard. Each book prepared me to take in whatever God wanted for me once the sabbatical started.

Each day during my sabbatical, I spent extended time in the word and prayer, as well as ongoing study. Two books I read that were particularly helpful were *Hearing God* by Dallas Willard and *Silence and Solitude* by Ruth Barton. Both took me to 1 Kings 19 and Elijah's

flight from Jezebel. If you are not familiar with the story, take the time to read it now before you continue reading. In the account, Elijah has defeated the prophets of Baal and has fled for his life into the wilderness. It is a famous account of a worn-out and depressed prophet at the end of his rope.

⁹There he came to a cave and lodged in it. And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁰ He said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away."

¹¹ And he said, "Go out and stand on the mount before the Lord." And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. ¹² And after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper. ¹³ And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" 1 Kings 19:9–13

Both Willard and Barton emphasized how God "spoke" to Elijah. Not in the earthquake, wind, or fire, but the form of a low whisper-literally translated. "a thin silence." What did God say? He asked him a guestion, "Why are you here?" God never asks a guestion for his benefit. God doesn't lack information and doesn't observe Elijah with a puzzled countenance. God asks the question for Elijah's benefit, not his own. He already knew Elijah's heart, but Elijah didn't. Often we rush through life planning, doing, and reacting to life without taking the time to stop and consider what is going on in our hearts.

God asks, "Why are you here Elijah?" In Elijah's response, we see several parts:

- I have been zealous for the Lord.
- They have killed all your prophets.
- I am the only one left and they are seeking to kill me.

God helped Elijah come to grips with some stuff building up in his heart. God showed him that his heart was tired, full of self-pity, and grossly overstated the danger of his predicament. God's mercy met Elijah right where he was-not only in that cave but in the current condition of his heart.

As I read Willard and Barton's account of 1 Kings 19, both encouraged the reader to stop and ask God, why am I here? So I took their advice. I asked God, "Why am I on this sabbatical?" I asked him to show me what was in my heart and wrote down what I heard in that thin silence. Here's some of what came to mind from my journal on February 3, 2022.

Why am I here?

- I am unsure of how to be emotionally intimate with those I love.
- I feel I am without direction for the church.
- I feel like I don't know what to do or how to lead.
- After years of preaching and looking back I realize I/we (elders) have not loved well.

- I constantly question my motives for my desire to preach, teach, and write.
- I want to hear from you, Lord.
- I want to love well.
- I want to be who you saved me to be.

Afterward, I prayed, "Lord, I cast my fears on you. I confess my motives are tainted with a desire to be seen as successful. But more than success, I want to be faithful. What I want is to labor in the strength of the Lord to the end that Jesus is exalted."

God knew what I needed, but I did not. Since Jesus considers me a friend, Jesus wants me to understand the good he desires for me, and why he desires it. To do that Jesus must show me what's in my heart, especially the garbage he plans to take out. God gave Elijah direction after unloading his heart. Likewise, I needed God to show me what was in my heart. Only then could I take these issues one-by-one to the Lord and have them addressed.

Much of Elijah's rant in 1 Kings is filled with self-pity and gross overstatements. Yet God still wanted Elijah to articulate his fears. Similarly, if I was going to hear from God and learn to take his yoke, God would bring me to a place where I could identify what was weighing me down.

But why now? Because it's hard to identify what weighs you down while you're pulling the plow. During intense service, whether it's Elijah taking on the prophets of Baal or me leading the reorganization of our church, a servant of God doesn't have the time or energy to stop and wonder, "How do I feel about all this?" Instead, you just keep doing what needs to be done. But when the battle is finished or the reorg is done. God wants us to rest and hear from him. Like Elijah, sometimes we need rest and silence for God to show us what needs addressing in our hearts.

So, why are you here? Have you ever stepped off the treadmill long enough to ask why you are running and where you hope to get to? It's unlikely your boss will grant you a sabbatical, but you can take a sabbath's rest. Make it a priority to take it. Make an intentional plan to stop running and answer God's question - what are you doing here? Tell him all you feel. He knows already, but he wants us to work it out with him. He wants to speak to us, if we are willing to stop and listen. *





Ages kindergarten & up sit together
Pre-K and under have care

Children attending classes Kindergarten and older will join the congregation in the

Classes resume for all ages on September 11, and children will be promoted to the next age/grade class at that time.

Sunday services.

Questions? Contact Cindy Sulwer, Next Gen Director at cindys@graceb3.org

June Grace Insider



By Worship Director Zack Stanton

ow do you define worship? Take a moment to consider that. What *is* worship? When does it happen? When *should* it happen? How should it happen? Who engages in worship?

These are pretty big questions and it's probably obvious that there isn't enough space to address them all right now. In the coming months, we'll consider some specific aspects of worship, but for now, let's lay some groundwork.

When asking foundational questions about life, worship comes up pretty quickly. Why do we even exist? The Westminster Catechism begins with this question/answer: What is the chief end of man? To glorify God and enjoy him forever. While it would take a while to unpack that, let's consider this for a second. Why did God make us? He didn't need us or require our assistance, and yet he made us! When God created the world and placed Adam and Eve in the garden, he gave them dominion over his creation, and walked with them (Gen 3:8). God made us to be in relationship with him, to know him, and to do life-giving work that blesses others and glorifies him.

To know this holy, powerful, divine being inevitably leads to worship. If we truly know him, we will be in awe of him — consider Isaiah's vision of God in Isaiah Chapter 6. It is impossible to have a sense of God's character and not feel the need to exalt him. Living in the right relationship with

God means we submit ourselves to him, honoring him with our lives. Adam and Eve found out the consequences of stepping away from their relationship with God.

But, isn't this an article about worship? Why is obedience being brought into the discussion? And, what does it have to do with worship? To understand this, we need to start by defining what worship is. The dictionary defines it as:

Worship verb

- 1 : to honor or show reverence for as a divine being or supernatural power
- 2 : to regard with great or extravagant respect, honor, or devotion

Worship noun

- 1: a form of religious practice with its creed and ritual
- 2 : extravagant respect or admiration for or devotion to an object of esteem

That's probably all fairly intuitive. But what those definitions don't do is unpack *how* honor or reverence is shown. How is this extravagant respect, admiration, and devotion played out? And what makes showing honor, reverence, or extravagant respect 'worship'? There are a lot of ways to show honor and devotion, meaning worship can be hard to pin down.

What this definition *does* show is this: worship isn't necessarily a religious activity. We can regard all kinds of people or objects with respect or devotion. With this in mind, we find that humanity is *constantly* worshiping throughout all of life! We want to see beautiful, heart-stirring things or powerful people and ideas to which we offer our honor or allegiance. Every day we elevate things to a pedestal, whether that is family, sports, entertainment, people, power, money, belongings, etc.



"Worship isn't necessarily a religious activity. We can regard all kinds of people or objects with respect or devotion. With this in mind, we find that humanity is constantly worshiping throughout all of life!"

In the Bible, when people didn't worship God, it was because they had their own ideas about what was important — they elevated other things to preeminence instead. In Romans 1, Paul says that people exchanged the glory of God for the things God made — they worshiped the creation rather than the creator.

We haven't even scratched the surface on worship, but let me leave you with a thought about Christian worship. What makes our worship unique? Here are two definitions to chew on.

Worship

- 1 : a proper response to who God is and what he has done as revealed in his word
- 2 : an engagement with God on the terms that he proposes and in the way that he alone makes possible

Consider those definitions. What does a proper response to God look like? What does the Bible say about our response to him? What does it mean to engage God? Consider what he has proposed to us — if we're truly going to worship a divine being, it must be on his terms. And consider all that he's done to make that engagement with him possible. *



BACKYARD BIBLE CLUB LOCATIONS

The time for all BBCs is 6:30-8pm.

NORTH LIBERTY
172 Lockmoor Cir.

NORTH LIBERTY

Deerfield Park

NORTH LIBERTY 455 N. Colton Dr.

BBC #4 JULY 11 - 14 MIDDLE AMANA 2990 128th Dr.

CORALVILLE
1932 Liberty Ln.

SERMON NOTES		DATE:
MAIN IDEA:	NOTES:	

SERMON NOTES		DATE:
MAIN IDEA:	NOTES:	

