

HOW TO BE BUILT UP

HOW TO MINISTER TO ONE
ANOTHER

PRACTICAL WAYS TO
REACH OTHERS

FOCUSED GIVING UPDATES



GRACE INSIDER
JANUARY 2023

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

STUDENT MINISTRY Don't miss this fun, free weekend
WINTER RETREAT for 7th - 12th graders! Games, food,
January 27-28 speakers, breakout sessions, and
tons of fun. Invite your friends!

REAL Come learn how to be intentional in
RELATIONSHIPS loving those around you with Christ's
CONFERENCE love as we seek to B.L.E.S.S. those
February 3-4 we are in relationship with. This
conference will address why God
made us for relationship, how God
designed those relationships, and
how he can redeem relationships
that are broken. Childcare provided
for 2 & under.

MEMBERSHIP CLASS If you consider Grace your home
February 12 church, this class is for you. Learn
10:15-11:30AM how you can join us on our mission
to glorify God by being and making
disciples who make disciples.

BAPTISM CLASS Our baptism class covers the whys,
February 19 & 26 whens and hows of baptism at
8:30-9:30AM Grace. If you are wondering what it's
all about and why we do what we
do at Grace, this will be very helpful
for you! Class is mandatory to be
baptized at Grace.

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GET THE NEXT INSIDER sent to your inbox at graceb3.org/insider

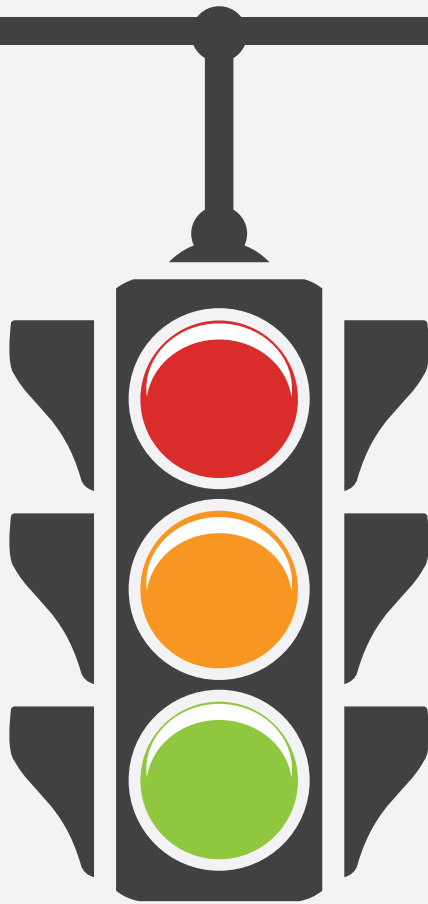
small group

Bible Study

at the Kenck home

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





1. 2. 3.
RED LIGHT!

By Global Outreach Pastor Paul Hansen

Remember the game you played as a kid? You would hide your eyes and turn around with your friends about 20 paces away. Then you would yell, "green light!" quickly turn and count to 10, then turn around again and yell, "red light!" Whoever you caught moving was out. For the moment, consider yourself "caught" at the red light! I am asking you to stop what you may be doing or even thinking about and consider a few important things before we move too deeply into 2023.

Before a traffic light turns red, it turns yellow. While it may be a common practice to speed up at that moment (come on, admit it), the intent is that we might slow down and exercise caution. Proverbs agrees with this principle and says, "Desire without knowledge is not good, and whoever makes haste with his feet misses his way." While that is true, slowing down is not always intuitive, at least not for me. Perhaps you can relate. I often wrongly believe I am more productive, effective, and accomplished if my feet simply move faster. But perhaps not. "Happy feet" can get you into trouble. One sports enthusiast noted that the best quarterbacks don't dance with their feet. The ones that stay calm and focused almost always have better-completed passes to their receivers. Pilots with happy feet don't keep the plane on centerline when they land. Passengers tend to appreciate pilots that do and who remain calm and focused. When we don't remain calm and focused, we miss out on God's best. We need to slow down and consider. What we do may not be inherently sinful, but unchecked flurry of activity may not yield the most significant results.

So how do we get significant results? Or, to put it another way, what about the green light? You know — the one that

means "Go!" Sometimes well-meaning Christians indeed go, and while they may have activity, they don't necessarily go in the right direction. Or perhaps they are going with the wrong people or going at an unsustainable pace. Either way, I invite you to consider "going" in another way. Specifically, I invite you to think about "G.O." as "Global Outreach" at Grace Community Church. Our Global Outreach (G.O.) efforts include branching out in three primary ways as a congregation:

- We want to cross the street.
- We want to cross cultures.
- And we want to cross barriers with the good news of Jesus.

Nested in these three clear priorities are numerous ways to advance the gospel through your life, your family's life, or your community group's life. These things include opportunities for local outreach, campus outreach, prayer, multi-ethnic engagement, short-term trips, career missionary service, education, mobilization, and encouraging and being involved with our field staff and other global mission partners. Phew! There is a lot!

Still, I am asking you to consider being involved someplace with G.O. in 2023. This is, after all, our mandate and calling. So how do you do this? If you are reading our paper version of the Insider, I want to encourage you to take out your smartphone and go to graceb3.org/go, or if you are reading online, you can click right here. This page gives you the place, opportunity, and contacts to go after what matters! Make January 2023 your big green-light! Let's G.O. and make disciples who make disciples!

Let's G.O. Church! 🌿



Real Relationships Conference

Loving Others with Christ's Love
Register now at graceb3.org/events

Come learn how to be intentional in loving those around you with Christ's love as we seek to B.L.E.S.S. those we are in relationship with.

We live in a broken world and we often see the brokenness in relationships. This conference will address why God made us for relationship, how God designed those relationships, and how he can redeem those relationships that are broken.

FEB 3-4

Fri 6:30 - 8:15pm

Sat 9am - 3pm

**NORTH LIBERTY
CAMPUS**

*childcare
available for
2 & under*

COST:

Individuals 15

Couples 25

By Lead Pastor Brooks Simpson

LIVING STONES BIBLE STUDY



*"So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation – if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like **living stones are being built up as a spiritual house**, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 2:1–5 (emphasis mine)*

Peter says we are being built up as a spiritual house. But how are we to be built up? How does a person who was once dead in sin and completely unconcerned about living for Christ become the kind of person who desires and is able to love God and others? Whether you have been following Jesus for years or began only recently, there are actions, attitudes, and beliefs we have that God wants to change. These attitudes are to be put away (1 Peter 2:1). But how are we built up? How do people like us who do not always desire and or able to love God and others as we know we should, become built up so that we can?

Here is a sure fire way to frustrate yourself: just try harder. How many times have you tried harder to love God or others the way you know you should, only to fail again and again? How many times have you tried harder to stop loving things you know you ought not love, only to fail? Knowing what you ought or ought not to do is never enough. Knowing that other human beings who are no more athletic than you are capable of and able to run marathons will not enable you to run one. If we are to run this spiritual marathon and truly love God and others as we are called to, we will have to be built up.

WHAT GOD DOES The building process is a supernatural work of God. Jesus promised to send the Spirit. **Spiritual growth is not a personal improvement program. It is a supernatural work of God** whereby the Spirit transforms us into the people God saved us to be.

WHAT WE DO We must feed on pure spiritual milk. **While the Spirit does the work, we are not passive.** Infants don't try to grow; they just eat, sleep, and make messes. But in eating, sleeping, and making messes, God grows them.

Being built up works the same way. We eat, sleep, and make messes, and God changes us. But I want you to consider what would happen if a baby is fed once a week. Not only would the child fail to thrive, it is likely the child would die. A Lifeway Research poll conducted in 2019 revealed that 50% of Christians read the Bible less than once a week. It is just not possible to grow unless we are fed.

We are committed to doing more than telling you what you ought to do. We want to equip you to become self-feeders so God will build you up. **This January we will provide a Living Stones Bible Study guide to help you become daily feeders.** The guide will parallel the Living Stones sermon series. This study guide is designed to help you develop the daily practice of encountering Jesus through the Scriptures. Through daily reading, prayer, and thoughtful meditation, you will learn to exercise spiritual muscles that will help you grow strong in your faith. Each week you will see various components repeated. They are repeated to help condition you to approach the word of God for more than information or out of duty. Our hope is that these practices repeated over months and months will condition you to **approach God's word as a personal letter to you from one who loves you and longs for you to experience his love.**

Each section is devoted to particular Old Testament saints. Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham and Sarah, etc. These saints are not the heroes of the story. God is the hero in these narratives and each story is to help us know and love God more. These accounts were written for us that we might learn from them (1 Corinthians 10:6-13 and Hebrews 11). Sometimes we see these Living Stones acting in heroic faith. Sometimes they act out of selfishness, fear, and faithlessness. In every instance we see the God who pursues them with unrelenting love. It is our prayer and hope that you will come to trust this unrelenting pursuer of souls and be built up as a Living Stone.

HOW TO USE THE LIVING STONES BIBLE STUDY

SCHEDULE A TIME AND LOCATION that will work for you each day to spend time in God's word. It may be helpful to have a spiral notebook or journal you can use to take notes, jot down questions, or even write your own prayers to God in response to what he shows you in his word. Each week you will repeat the same pattern as you engage and are engaged by the word of God.

OLD TESTAMENT READING You will read passages from the Old Testament to see God's unchanging love and commitment in establishing a people for his own possession (1 Peter 2:9) through his interaction with Adam through Joshua. Sometimes the objects of his love are faithful and sometimes they are not.

NEW TESTAMENT AND PSALMS You will also read related Psalms and New Testament passages which will demonstrate how the Father's interaction with each Old Testament saint is made perfect and available to us through Jesus.

PRAYER AND MEDITATION You will ask the Lord to search your heart to lead you in application (Psalm 139:23-24). You will be asked to consider who you most identify with in the stories and why. Sometimes you will identify with a victim, a villain, or possibly the hero.

RESPONSE After your reading, prayer, and meditation, you are ready to ask the Lord what he would have you do in response to the truths he has shown you in his word. Ask and listen. What would the Lord have you do? Perhaps you will be led to begin trusting God for things you have not, begin a practice you have never done, serve someone specific, share something you have (faith, possessions, a meal). Or maybe the Spirit will prompt you to repent of some attitude or action. Perhaps your response is to simply bow in humble adoration and gratitude for having encountered the living God through his word.

SHARE God is creating a people (plural) for his own possession. God wants us to celebrate what he is doing in and through us or our spiritual family. Each week you will be asked to share what God has been teaching you and or is leading you to do. This could be a friend, a spouse, or a group of Christians you are in regular fellowship with.

Let God do the building as you develop a daily discipline of feeding on the pure spiritual milk of God's word. 🌿



FOCUSED GIVING

By Business Director Caleb Stamp

Focused giving is our initiative designed to spur forward ministry work and godly financial stewardship. It's made up of opportunities for you to go beyond your regular contribution to Grace in order to make a specific, tangible, and immediate kingdom impact toward particular ministry opportunities.

At the beginning of our fiscal year in July, we posted nine focused giving projects to our website at graceb3.org/focus. In case you haven't visited the website yet, here's a listing of those projects, and how we're progressing toward our funding goals.

Extending Grace - Family Encouragement

Goal: \$3,600

Amount Raised to Date: \$2,929

Support foster families by offering opportunities for them to bond and grow together. Funds donated will support events including renting the North Liberty pool to offer a free pool night twice in the winter, training for foster parents in the spring, as well as other fun family activities throughout the year.

Extending Grace - Groceries for Foster Families

Goal: \$3,150

Amount Raised to Date: \$550

Receiving a new child into your home results in many logistical pieces which need to align, as well as bonding between the parents and child. Extending Grace provides **grocery delivery** for these families to ease their time of transition.

Extending Grace - Backpacks and School Supplies

Goal: 3,500

Amount Raised to Date: \$265

'Back to School' is a time of year when families spend a lot of money preparing for school. Extending Grace plans to **provide new backpacks and school supplies to over 180 families this year**. Help Extending Grace to alleviate some of the financial burdens for these families.



Back to School Giveaway this fall.

Counseling Scholarships

Goal: \$3,000

Amount Raised to Date: \$1,000

Sometimes, couples or individuals need **critical and intense multi-day biblical counseling or other specialized care outside the walls of Grace Community Church**. However, the cost is an obstacle for many who need this help. This fund provides scholarships to alleviate that burden so that these couples/individuals can focus fully on healing in Christ during this time of intensive care.

Downtown Meal Giveaways

Goal: \$1,000

Amount Raised to Date: \$727

We want to be generous because Christ has been generous with us. Your focused financial giving in this area will allow us to **offer students a meal to share Christ's love and tell them more about our biblical community**.



Moments before passing out popsicles to incoming freshmen at our Downtown campus.

Holiday Hospitality

Goal: \$2,000

Amount Raised to Date: \$300

For special holiday services like Christmas and Easter there's a little more involved compared to a typical Sunday service. These funds help us **provide additional decorations and refreshments for those holiday services**.

Children's and Student Ministries Bibles and Resources

Goal: \$1,000

Amount Raised to Date: \$1250

We would love to **provide Bibles for any child or student that does not have one and can not afford one**. These Bibles and resources are offered during outreach events and also for our own students in our ministries.

Backyard Bible Club

Goal: \$1,500

Amount Raised to Date: \$6

Backyard BibleClub is an amazing opportunity to reach our neighbors with the gospel each summer. Your gifts will be used to help **make Bibles available for those who don't have one, as well as give each Backyard Bible Club a block party** for the families to come and see what the kids have been doing all week.

International Student Getaway

Goal: \$2,000

Amount Raised to Date: \$1050

These 5-day trips are a chance for international students to learn about Jesus with their peers while setting aside the distractions and pressures of being a student far from home. For many international students who are now following Jesus, these trips are a key inflection point on their journey. Would you consider joining with us in opening the door for more students to come and see? 🌿



Student Ministry Winter Retreat • Jan 27-28
Register at graceb3.org/events

Don't miss this fun weekend for 7th – 12th graders! Games, food, speakers, breakout sessions, and tons of fun. Invite your friends! Details and registration at graceb3.org/events

Questions?

Contact Brian at brianh@graceb3.org

By Biblical Counseling Director Aimee Marino

DARE TO CARE

Hey, church, can I give you a challenge? A dare? Are you game? Okay, here it is: I challenge you to make my role here on Grace's staff... obsolete.

*Editor's Note:
This article was
first published in
the January 2021
Insider.*

Okay, okay, I'm being ornery, but let me explain.

I am blessed to serve as the Director of Biblical Counseling here at Grace Community Church. It's incredible, and I'd very much like to stay in this role for a good long time, as the Lord leads. But you know what I would love even more? For all followers of Jesus to become so skilled in speaking the truth in love to one

another, carrying one another's burdens, and ministering to one another during hardship using the scriptures that there's no more need for formal biblical counseling. Can you picture it?

In a broken world, there will always be a place for crisis-level help, i.e., biblical counseling. But what if we, as a church, were to take steps towards this dream of the church taking care of one another in a skillful way? What difference would this make in your family? In your community group? In Grace Community Church, as a whole? What impact could a church body like that have on our community? Would we not be the sweet aroma of Jesus, filtering through our community like a warm apple pie fresh out of the oven, drawing the lost to the table of Christ?


Church, by the power of the Spirit, we can do this. Part of being a disciple of Christ is to practice the "One Anothers" of scripture, including

- Bearing one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2)
- Speaking the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15, 25)
- Comforting one another (1 Thessalonians 4:18)
- Admonishing one another (Romans 15:14; Colossians 3:16)

and 50+ others, too – look them up! We do these things because we are "members of one another," (Romans 12:5; Ephesians 4:25), and members of Christ himself.

How do we practically do this, and take it to the next level of ministering to one another? This is Biblical Soul Care: the call to minister to one another in complete dependence on



 Bible Study Fellowship

Men's Bible Study

Mondays 6:55-8:25PM

Sign up at [*graceb3.org/events*](https://graceb3.org/events)

the word of God, the Spirit of God, and the community of God to help others experience transforming life change.

The more we can be equipped as a community, the better we can care for one another as needs arise and see God's power at work as he works through us to bring hope and healing. That said, there will always be situations that require more skilled help. The reality is that as long as we live in a broken world, there will continue to be more serious situations that require trained biblical counselors to intervene. We currently have a waiting list for counseling at Grace, and the fact is we need more counselors!

Some of the counselors at Grace are on staff, but many are lay counselors: folks who have other careers, but who have taken the step to be trained and become Certified Biblical Counselors with Grace.

We need both; we need followers of Jesus to provide soul care to those around them, and we need Certified Biblical Counselors to provide more acute care. We are all called to some level of giving soul care to one another, and some are called to invest more deeply, to stand on the front lines of sin and suffering, and to see the power of Christ for regeneration up close. I would invite you to pray: ask God if he is calling you to explore becoming a Certified Biblical Counselor.

Whether you are considering certification, or whether you want to be better at applying Scripture in your home, your community group, or to your own heart, would you pray about how to take your next step? There are a couple opportunities coming this spring:

Attend “Biblical Soul Care: Weekend Edition”

This three-weekend course is our flagship Biblical Soul Care class in a new format that is more accessible for many to be trained to use the Scriptures to minister to the hurting... and your own heart as well. Check it out on graceb3.org/events

Come to Monday Night Dinnertime Training

We spend the dinner hour each Monday night training on important counseling topics. If you have a basic understanding of Biblical Soul Care, and are interested in learning more about these dinnertime training times, contact Chelsy Reed at chelsyr@graceb3.org

Attend Thrive Class Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands

If you've already taken Biblical Soul Care, or are looking for a way to be equipped on Sunday mornings, this class will give you guided, hands-on experience in applying soul care to your everyday life.

Request Counseling

Sometimes, we need to heal before we can help others. Request counseling at graceb3.org/get-counseling 🌿

SERMON NOTES		DATE:
MAIN IDEA:	NOTES:	

REGISTRATION OPEN

SIGN UP AT GRACEB3.ORG/THRIVE

INSTRUMENTS IN THE REDEEMER'S HANDS

DAVE KIRK • 8:30AM • RM 307

THE EVIDENCE & REASON FOR GOD

BART FLOYD • 8:30AM • RM 306

THE ANATOMY OF THE BIBLE

ANDREW MEREDITH • 8:30AM • RM 203

THE REDEMPTION STORY OF GOD FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION

PETER CHIDISTER & JACOB VARVEL • 10:15AM • RM 201

MARKS OF A DISCIPLE (JR./ SR. HIGH)

BRIAN HAGEDORN • 10:15AM • RM 203

TYING THE KNOT: PREMARITAL COUNSELING CLASS

DAVE KIRK • 11:30AM • CONFERENCE ROOM

SOUL CARE WEEKEND EDITION

BIBLICAL COUNSELING TEAM •

8AM-4:30PM • SATURDAYS FEB 25, MAR 25, & APR 22

THRIVE
WINTER