



Winter Volunteer Fair

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# WINTER THRIVE PREVIEW

GRACE INSIDER  
JANUARY 2024



# UPCOMING EVENTS

*Learn more and/or sign up for events  
by tapping on the events or visit  
[graceb3.org/events](https://graceb3.org/events)*

10TH | Refill Resumes

26 & 27TH →



28TH →

MARCH 8 & 9TH →



# THE PARTS OF PRAYER

## WHAT IS PRAYER, PART II

*By Executive Pastor Josh Haveman*

PRAYER IS THE ACT OF INSERTING OURSELVES INTO GOD'S COMMUNION with himself and asking him to listen to us. Properly done, this involves the Holy Spirit speaking up for us. It also involves our giving up everything that we think and hope for in exchange for God's thoughts and plans.

You've likely heard these right attitudes and actions described through the acronym ACTS: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication. Some people use that acronym and those terms to describe different types of prayer, or prayers made for different purposes. Whether you want to learn the acronym or not, it is useful for calling attention to the varied aspects of prayer that Jesus teaches. Examining Jesus' prayer in Matthew 6:9-13 we see the parts of ACTS modeled for us:

**ADORATION/PRAISING GOD:** *"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name."*

Jesus gives us the example of the most basic form of praise - simply saying "We praise your name, Father!" There are many other ways we can praise God in prayer. Like the psalmists, we can highlight God's creative works and his wonders (e.g., Psalm 145, Psalm 8). Like the prophets, we can praise him for what he has done to save us in the past and how he is making a way for



us to spend eternity with him (e.g., Exodus 15). Or, like the apostles, we can praise him for the establishment of his church and the church's ongoing work (Acts 16, Revelation 5). Whatever the form of praise, it is good to praise the Lord for who he is and what he has done.

**CONFESSION/FORGIVENESS:** *"Forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven our debtors."*

This phrase teaches us that we need to confess our sins and ask forgiveness, and also forgive others when we pray. Part of the reason that God wants us to insert ourselves into his communion is to tell him we know when we have done wrong. Our confession of sin communicates a right attitude toward the Lord where we acknowledge our complete need of him. Likewise, asking that we be able to forgive, and that our forgiveness of others be tied to the forgiveness we receive, demonstrates humility. We don't confess our sins and forgive others just to feel good. We confess and forgive because we have been forgiven, and we want others to know forgiveness, too.

**THANKSGIVING:** *"Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."*

How is this phrase from the Lord's prayer about giving thanks to God? Nowhere in this sentence do we see the word thanks, or thanksgiving. This is true. But think about what it means to ask for God's kingdom to come, and for his will to be done. If you are asking for that, you are asking for God to be king of your life, and of the entire world. There is no better way to thank someone than to give your life in service to that person.

You could argue that it is the only sincere thanks one could give when they have received

everlasting life at no cost. Not that this should be the only way we thank God. Prayers of simple, straightforward thanks to God are good and right as well. But while salvation is a free and gracious gift, any true thanks we offer in return for that gift will cost us something. Therefore, thank God by giving up your personal kingdom. Letting God reign in your life is a price worth paying as you thank the Lord in your soul, with your lips, and throughout your life.

**SUPPLICATION/REQUESTS:** *"Give us this day our daily bread/And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."*

There are many types of requests. Jesus outlines two types that we should certainly be bringing to God. The first is a request for God to meet our daily needs: food, clothing, shelter, etc. Notice the inclusion of “daily” before the word “bread.” We can ask for provisions that go beyond our simple needs, but Jesus teaches us to ask God for the daily, routine needs.

The second request is for spiritual strength and safety. And at its heart, this request is very similar to the first. Spiritual strength and safety is as much a daily need as food for our body. Of course, there are other types of needs. It is likely, in fact, that there are many people we know with needs that seem very important - physical health, protection from harm, etc. But of all of the requests that can be put before God, Jesus is clear God wants us to interject with requests for physical and spiritual essentials. At the very least, bring those requests before him as they help you think of God as your provider and Lord.

Join me for the next article in February. We'll begin to take a closer look at when and how prayer should happen. 🌿





# MYL | IGNITE YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

**DES MOINES • MARCH 8 & 9**  
**REGISTER AT [GRACEB3.ORG/EVENTS](https://graceb3.org/events) BY JAN 17**

**STRENGTHEN YOUR FAITH AND COURAGE  
AS A LEADER AND DISCIPLE-MAKER!**

Ignite is an amazing opportunity for high school students to hear the gospel, learn how to respond to objections to Christianity and handle cultural topics biblically, and be encouraged and challenged both as a disciple of Jesus and as a leader.



# Focused Giving Update

*By Business Director  
Caleb Stamp*

FOCUSED GIVING IS OUR ONGOING 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 focused giving projects to our website at [graceb3.org/focus](https://graceb3.org/focus). In case you haven't visited the website yet, here's a listing of those projects that you can help support.

## CURRENT PROJECTS

**EXTENDING GRACE** – *Backpacks and School Supplies for Foster Families*

Goal: \$3,000

Amount raised to date: \$10

'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.



## **EXTENDING GRACE – *Foster Family Encouragement***

Goal: \$3,000

Amount raised to date: \$605

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: \$4,000

Amount raised to date: \$321

Receiving a new child into your home results in many logistical pieces that 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.

## **COUNSELING SCHOLARSHIPS**

Goal: \$3,000

Amount raised to date: \$2,779

Sometimes, a couple or individual needs critical care in the form of multi-day biblical counseling intensive, 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.

## **Next Gen Bibles and Resources**

Goal: \$1,700

Amount raised to date: \$356

We would love to provide Bibles for any child or student without one or who can not afford one. These Bibles and resources are offered during outreach events and also for our own students in the various Next Gen ministries.



**SHORT-TERM MISSIONS SCHOLARSHIPS**

Goal: \$2,000

Amount raised to date: \$1,288

Twice each year Grace commissions teams to minister to the people of Guatemala in partnership with Bethel Ministries. Scholarships will be used to help make it possible for individuals at Grace to attend who otherwise would find the financial costs overwhelming.

**VIDEO PRODUCTION EQUIPMENT**

Goal: \$4,000

Amount raised to date: \$0

Sharing the gospel through our experiences and testimonies is a powerful way to show how we've come from emptiness to wholeness through God's goodness. Funds will purchase photography and video equipment to share the power of God's work in his people through testimonies in services on Sunday mornings and online stories.

**VOLUNTEER TRAINING**

Goal: \$950

Amount raised to date: \$0

Help provide training materials and a meal for Grace volunteers during our annual connections training for greeters, info desk staff, ushers, and lobby hosts.



## PAST PROJECTS

### DADDY DAUGHTER DANCE

Goal: \$1,200

Amount raised to date: \$845

We sought help to fund the venue for the November 2023 Daddy Daughter Dance. This is a popular event; hosting it offsite allowed more people to attend and create a meaningful outreach.

### OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Goal: \$1,000

Amount raised to date: \$0

In 2023, Grace served as a regional drop-off center for Operation Christmas Child. We sought support for this annual outreach ministry to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to children in need around the world through Christmas boxes. Funding supplied boxes, materials, and transportation costs for Grace and local churches. 🌿





*By Volunteer Engagement Director Ryan McFadden*

# ARE YOU READY TO TAKE YOUR NEXT STEP?

**winter volunteer fair • jan 28**

IN A CHURCH OUR SIZE, it's easy to walk in on Sunday and think that you aren't needed to serve because everything seems to run well. You might be thinking that you don't have any skills or gifts that are useful to the church, that you don't have the time to serve, or that nothing would fit into your schedule.

The goal for the January volunteer fair is to share opportunities to serve in the spring semester. The church needs individuals who can serve in a variety of ways during Sunday services and also outside of Sunday service times. Ministries you'll see at the fair include Children's Ministry, Student Ministry, Guest Services, Coffee, Music and A/V, and Outreach, to name just a few.



## **WHY SHOULD I SERVE?**

As the church, we need multiple people in different areas using their unique gifts and strengths to help spread the gospel and serve as the hands and feet of Jesus Christ. God made you with specific abilities to help serve the body of Christ in ways that others aren't equipped to do. This is reflected in 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 when Paul writes to the church of Corinth, saying the body has multiple members and cannot function with only one part of the body.

## **WHERE CAN I FIND THESE OPPORTUNITIES?**

Take the first step by checking out the Volunteer Fair on Sunday, January 28, after service. Meet folks serving in different ministries and let them know if you're interested in serving with them. Afterward, a ministry leader will contact you to meet and discuss the opportunities in more detail, as well as help you decide if their ministry is a good fit for your strengths and availability.

## **IF I DO NOT SEE AN OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE, WHAT IS MY NEXT STEP?**

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [ryanm@graceb3.org](mailto:ryanm@graceb3.org). I would love to meet you and help you find opportunities to serve as part of Grace Community Church.

Please consider volunteering and help to build up our church body. Everyone plays an important part within the body of Jesus Christ. 🌿





*By Next Gen Director Cindy Sulwer*

# SETTING YOUR PARENTING INTENTIONS FOR THE YEAR

THE WHIRLWIND OF CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS ARE BEHIND US and as is often the case, January brings with it reflection and setting, or resetting, of priorities. Now is a great time to be intentional about discipling the children in your home.

As a parent, I know that if I don't prioritize prayer, Scripture reading, and discussion, they don't happen. Teaching your children about Jesus can be as simple as looking out the window and commenting on the beautiful snow and how God created it, or as complex as answering their deep questions about the nature of God.

Find rhythms that work for your family so they can be sustainable; consider adopting one of these ideas:



- ➔ Read a devotion and Scripture at breakfast, lunch or dinner
- ➔ Ask your children about their highs and lows from their day
- ➔ Pray over your children on the car ride to school or afternoon practice
- ➔ Play worship music as you get ready for the day or make dinner
- ➔ Ask your children where they saw God at work in their day
- ➔ Ask your children for prayer requests and pray with them over their requests

Discipleship doesn't need to be flashy, it can be simple and meaningful at the same time. Above all, walk through each day with Deuteronomy 6:5-8 as your guide,

*“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”*

When we walk in light of this passage, we will be intentional about pursuing Jesus and leading our children to do the same. 🌿





**For 7th-12th graders • Jan 26-27**  
**Register at [graceb3.org/events](https://graceb3.org/events) by Jan 12**

Have fun getting to know others over the weekend while hearing teaching on the things YOU have asked about! Our theme this year is **Embrace: Christ, Community, and the Lost**. We'll enjoy games, worship, food, and talk about the topics that you face every day. Invite a friend!

Let us know when you sign up if you're coming for one day or both days.

Sign up by January 12, 2024!





# Winter Thrive Preview

*By Spiritual Formation Pastor Dave Kirk*

**AS WE START THE NEW YEAR**, we are excited about our upcoming semester of Thrive classes which begin on Sunday, January 21. I encourage you to sign up for one of these classes! Each of them will equip you with tools to apply to your daily life, and an opportunity to fellowship with other believers as we learn and train together.

To help you as you decide which Thrive class to take, we thought we would put the teacher bios up so that you can see who is teaching each class.

**SCOTT HEEMSTRA/AUSTIN WARD**  
*Practical Disciple Making • 8:30am*

Scott Heemstra, along with his wife Paige, are on staff with Navigators. Along with ministering to college students at the University of Iowa, they also lead a community group here at Grace. Scott and Paige are part of our lay missions team helping to grow our outreach ministry at Grace. Scott is a



gifted teacher and communicator who is passionate about discipleship and equipping Christians to effectively disciple others.

Austin Ward, along with his wife Lauren, have previously been a part of great discipleship building churches and have spent several years as long-term missionaries in Malaysia. They are part of the lay missions team at Grace. Like Scott, Austin has a huge heart for the gospel, discipling others and seeing disciples equipped to make disciples. Austin brings a lot of great perspectives to discipleship.

[\*View details about Scott and Austin's class here.\*](#)

## **BART FLOYD AND ANDY SCHAEKENBACH**

*The Evidence and Reason for God • 8:30am*

Bart Floyd works in the banking industry and has been a long time member at Grace Community Church. Bart has taught Thrive classes for almost 15 years in addition to teaching Bible classes at Oakdale prison prior to COVID. He is a student of the Bible, knowledgeable in the Word and in apologetics. Bart is an effective communicator and teacher and is able to share difficult concepts in a way that is very accessible to his students.

Andy Schaekenbach is a long-time member of Grace and is a physician at our local Veterans Hospital. Andy is a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary and has previously led Fellowship of the Bean—a men's Bible study—for a number of years and continues to be an active study member. Andy has taught Thrive classes for almost 15 years, bringing a love for the Lord, the Word, and people to how he teaches. He is a skilled teacher whose disarming and hospitable style brings warmth and grace to the classroom.

[\*View details about Floyd and Andy's class here.\*](#)



## **JACOB VARVEL AND PETER CHIDISTER**

*Following God Through Pain and Suffering • 8:30am*

Jacob Varvel and his family have been at Grace for over ten years, and in that time, Jacob has been a community group leader with his wife Linda. Jacob serves as our Communications and Connections Director here at Grace. Jacob has a deep love of Jesus, the Word, and people. Jacob brings a sincere heart and a curious mind to his teaching that helps to bring out the truth of God's Word. Jacob started teaching Thrive classes last year, and he has been a great addition to the Thrive teaching team.

Peter Chidister and his family have also been at Grace for over ten years, but they did move away for a couple of years for work, and we consider ourselves very lucky to have them back. Peter, like Jacob, is a newer teacher to our Thrive teaching team. Peter brings a passionate heart for Jesus and for discipleship to his teaching. He is very thoughtful, smart, and deliberate as a teacher.

[View details about Peter and Jacob's class here.](#)

## **DAVE KIRK**

*Growing in Christ • 10:15am*

*Premarital Counseling Class • 11:30am*

I have been on staff as a pastor at Grace for almost 15 years. I serve as the Spiritual Formation Pastor and am also the Co-Founder and Director of the Eastern Iowa Biblical Counseling Coalition, a ministry to numerous churches in Iowa that helps pastors and leaders build shepherding into their church discipleship models. I have two Masters Degrees from Liberty University in Christian Leadership and Church Growth/Church Planting. My heart is to see people grow to know and understand their union with and identity in Christ so that this understanding will ignite them to live joyfully with and for Jesus daily.

[View details about Growing in Christ here.](#)

[View details about Premarital Counseling here.](#)



**BRIAN HAGEDORN AND GRACE STUDENT MINISTRY TEAM**  
**Deep Dive • 10:15am**  
**For 7th-12th graders**

Brian Hagedorn and his wife Liz have led the Grace Student Ministry (GSM) for the past ten years. The Hagedorns have surrounded themselves with a great team of lay leaders to build into the students of our church. The GSM team have a huge heart for Jesus and for middle school and high school students to come to know Christ and to grow in him to be disciples and disciplemakers. They're accessible to our students and seek to help students apply God's truth to their lives.

[View details about Brian's class here.](#)



# THRIVE

CLASSES START JAN 21

[register here](#)

