

2024

Remembering what God has done this past year.

Evidences of Grace



“

Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing. Col 1:5-6

Grace Family,

In 2024, our church saw God work in many incredible ways. We rejoice that, “the gospel, which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing...” (Colossians 1:5-6). What a privilege it is to be witnesses, heralds, and ambassadors of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ! As you read through this booklet, may your heart be filled with gratitude and wonder at the gracious work of God in our midst. And may reading these evidences of God’s grace fill you with greater confidence that “he who began a good work in us will see it on to full completion” (Philippians 1:6).

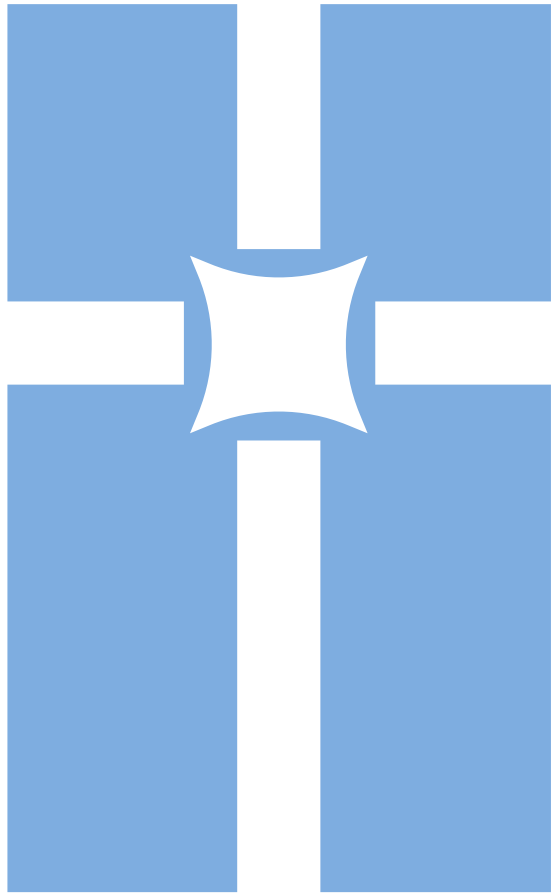


Pastor Mark

Our Gospel-Centered Mission

At Grace our mission is to glorify God by making fully devoted followers of Jesus who passionately love God and people. We do this through gospel-centered worship, disciple-making, community and service. The gospel is not simply the entry point into the Christian life but that it is also the foundation and power that shapes all we do as followers of Jesus Christ, both in our daily lives and in our experience as the corporate body of Christ.

It would be impossible to try to account for all the ways God has used us in 2024 to increase our mutual devotion to Christ, but here are a few corporate evidences of God's grace as we "press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14).





Sunday Mornings at Grace

Sunday morning worship gatherings of Grace Baptist Church continue to portray the incredible Good News through the gathered church as we praise God for who He is, confess our need for Him, and give Him thanks for this salvation. Through the expository preaching ministry, we have heard the sound preaching of God's word through the book of Luke. Musically, we learned many new congregational songs this year - some recently written and

some written long ago. Through gospel-centered songs that are rooted in scripture, musically, diverse, and inclusive of the entire congregation, we continued our love for singing together for the glory of God. We continue to praise God that 2024 brought an increase in Sunday worship service attendance, and as a church gathering we have now surpassed our attendance numbers prior to 2020.

Wednesday Prayer Service

Wednesday Prayer Service continues to be a midweek spiritual watering hole for our church as we gather to sing, hear God's word, and pray as a congregation. The elders have continued faithfully teaching on different prayers in the Bible, and we have been blessed to have monthly prayer dinners and conversations with our missionaries.





Giving

The Lord has provided for all our needs in remarkable ways in 2024. So many Grace members have found the joy of giving sacrificially to the work of Christ through the church. We were able, by God's grace, to meet our 2023-2024 budget and are on track to meet our 2024-2025 budget as well.

Baptism & New Members

We praise God for the 14 people who went public with their faith in believer's baptism this year, and we are so grateful for the 43 new members who have covenanted with Grace as their local church family.

Elders

Our church is blessed to have godly men who serve as elders (pastors). Elders are the spiritual leaders of Grace who devote themselves to shepherding our church family. They do this primarily through overseeing the teaching of God's Word, providing pastoral care, and praying for church members. This year, we had the privilege of affirming two new elders: Pastor Ken St. Cyr and Pastor James McCall.



Students

Each week around 85-90 students attend U-Turn or 24/7 ministry, where they are hearing God's Word, memorizing His Word and meeting together in small groups to encourage one another in their walk with the Lord. We are seeing many of our middle school & high school students serve in the Children's ministry during Sunday School and Church. Our High School students as well are serving in AWANA and making a huge impact upon the lives of the students and leaders. It has been a huge encouragement to see Grace students invite their unsaved friends to join in UTurn and 24/7. Students are sharing the gospel message with their peers and with their families.



One highlight of 2024 was a Missions Camp, "Camp Wayumi" where students experienced a "jungle-type environment" and learned about reaching people in the unreached people groups. This week of camp made a huge impact upon the lives of our students and several feel God's call to full-time Christian service.



Grace Kids

In 2024 hundreds of children's gospel-centered Sunday school and children's church lessons were shared, dozens of Awana small groups met throughout the school year, and the all-hands-on-deck week of Grace Gives included VBS, Art Camp, and Sports Camp, which have allowed our children to hear, see, and live out the gospel through the leadership of over 100 dedicated volunteers every week.

As our church family continues to be a light within our community, we have seen a number of new families, who have been invited to church by another family, getting involved in the children's ministry and choosing to become part of our Grace family. Our families are doing a great job inviting other families, and the love and faithfulness of those serving in the children's ministry have fostered a welcoming and winsome environment that has led to families making Grace their new church home.

Young Adults

Our Sunday Morning class for young adults has thrived over the past year, fostering both growth in numbers and the spiritual lives of our 18 to 25-year-olds. With the monthly fun and interactive fellowship, young adults have engaged how the gospel transforms their work, words, and relationships.

Precept Bible Study

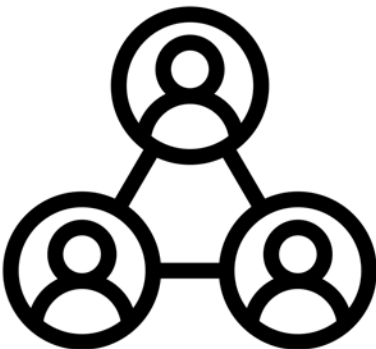
Around 40 students covered a lot of ground digging into 1, 2, and 3 John and the book of Jude. The three basics of the Christian life were explored – true doctrine, obedient living, and fervent devotion. The capstone of the study was the command in Jude to contend earnestly for the faith!

Internship

It has been an honor to witness Tim Mull's growth as an intern through teaching, service, assigned reading, and mentorship. We have been blessed by his gifts, and with the encouragement of the church pastors, he and other men from Grace have blessed other churches through pulpit supply.

Counseling

The counseling ministry at Grace has served those within our church, school, and community who have experienced difficulties. We have seen spiritual, personal, and relational growth as we walk with one another through the valleys. It is encouraging to see that our congregation realizes the need to seek help and not struggle alone.



Small Groups

This year three new small groups were formed with other groups gaining new leaders that were willing to step up as previous leaders stepped out to form new groups. We are so grateful to see this kind of multiplication in this valuable ministry.

Support Groups

Support groups continue to minister to those in the church and community who suffer from different types of pain and loss by providing a safe, caring environment to share the love and hope in Jesus as they get practical help. Deacon Antonio Moody provides guidance and support to group leaders in programs that include DivorceCare; Single & Parenting; GriefShare; Mood Disorders; Healing Hope: Abuse Recovery; and Overcomers: Addition Recovery.



GriefShare, which re-launched in 2023, continued to offer support to those who have lost loved ones in recent days. Besides helping Grace church members, it continues to be a very valuable and fruitful outreach into our community.

Mood Disorders Sharing & Prayer

The Mood Disorders Sharing and Prayer group celebrated ten years of faithful service this year. They continue to work closely with families who are new to navigating this space.



The Single and Parenting Support Group has expanded the content for group members to provide not only support but information and resources that will assist these single parents and their children, including internet safety and co-parenting apps. Meeting virtually has allowed parents to have flexibility, thus meeting families where they are.

Healing Hope

We are also so grateful for Laura Gore's 16 years of faithful leadership in the Healing Hope ministry. She has worked hard to develop lessons that allow group members to focus on their identity in Christ and their ability to live a life of purpose and hope in him.



Grace Christian School

We praise God for GCS and its 50 years of ministry to the community. Over the years, God has supplied every need to allow the ministry to make an eternal impact on the lives of its students and families for the glory of God. The caring, dedicated teachers and staff are the heart of the school, and make it a great school academically and spiritually. GCS's 300+ students engage weekly with the gospel in chapels, Bible classes, small groups, mentoring relationships, music concerts, sports, clubs, summer camps, and daily interactions with teachers and administrators.

To Live Is Christ Discipleship

Formerly known as 2 Squared Discipleship, this discipleship program was rebranded this year as To Live is Christ. Work has begun to create a comprehensive discipleship program for all believers in the church. One that focuses on living from our union with Christ. In the Fall, we launched a new Book 1, Look, with over 20 members participating and growing in their understanding of gospel Christianity.



Missions

By God's grace we were able to support 28 missionary couples/ individuals this past year and five mission organizations through our generous giving to the general fund, where 23% goes to missions. We celebrated one missionary couple, Ron and Angie Onks, who came back to the United States for retirement after serving faithfully on the mission field in Australia for over 30 years. Grace has also become the sending church of our long-time partners in Spain, Daniel and Eloisa Estrada.

Our commitment to set aside 23% of General Fund Contributions enabled Grace Baptist Church to send out \$487,000 to missionaries. Contributions received and sent out that were designated to missionaries totaled \$128,000. In addition, \$112,000 was sent to support the Revitalization of New Southwest Baptist Church in Baltimore Maryland. So in total, Grace Baptist Church sent out \$727,000 in 2024 to missionaries who are hard at work spreading the Gospel throughout the world. Praise God!

Church Planting

As a church, we were able to send out the Omisanmi family to revitalize a church in Baltimore City in June, 2024. They received enough financial support to meet their needs to sustain them for over a year. Pastor Akin has had weekly leadership meetings with a core team, preparing them to be the leaders of New Southwest Baptist Church. He has also been able to serve as an elder at The Garden Church in the interim before relaunching New South West. With the help of generous donations, the Omisanmis have also been able to purchase and settle into their new home in Baltimore.



Sunday Morning Classes

Each week hundreds of members and attenders gather to study the Bible together in close community. Two of our classes have restarted the three-year journey through The Gospel Project curriculum, while others are using a five-year plan to explore the scriptures chapter by chapter. Our Women in the Word class has continued to grow and provide both great exegesis and valuable community.

Empty Cradle

This year we launched the Empty Cradle Ministry with an initial Service of Remembrance in March followed by what will be an annual event in October, the pregnancy loss month. The ministry serves those who have experienced infant loss by providing resources and connections with couples who have shared a similar experience.



Music & Media Ministry

Worship services at Grace continue to demonstrate the incredible sufficiency and faithfulness of God through the Music and Media Ministry. The choir has enjoyed adding greater numbers of singers to the sound of God's praise, and with the band and lead singers they have helped lead the church worshipping in spirit and truth. All the musicians have been challenged to learn new styles, techniques, and continue to help reflect the sound of the church's growing diversity.



Grace Kids Choir has continued to thrive under the leadership of Golden Aina along with a team of helpers. We are thankful that God continues to show his faithfulness by how the kids are learning more about Him through each song they sing.



Led by a team of incredible volunteers, the Media Ministry faithfully equipped the church with an excellent livestream of worship services and executed the intricate details required for worship services in person. As the staff communications team, Daniel Vakharia and Liz Craig have continued to provide the church body - through the website, emails, and social media - with helpful and compelling information about the life of Grace Baptist Church.





Grace Gives

This was the twelfth year of Grace Gives! We had 276 elementary and middle school students who heard the gospel at VBS, Sports Camp, Drama Camp, and Art Camp. Dozens of adults also heard the gospel throughout the week, and hundreds were blessed with free car washes, gift cards, visits, and home improvement. We praise God that through the ministry of Grace Gives, several families have started attending our church. Some have even become members!



Grace Gives Thanksgiving

The weekend before Thanksgiving dozens of volunteers made eighty visits to bring holiday cheer and the love of Jesus to church and community members, firehouses, police stations, and shut-ins.



Community Christmas Celebration

Even though it was extremely cold outside this year, the truth of the gospel of Jesus was able to warm our hearts, and the hearts of over 1000 visitors. The true meaning of Christmas, the birth of our Savior, was presented to our guests by over 250 church volunteers at our annual “CCC.” By walking through the live nativity, reading the scriptures, and contemplating the cross and resurrection’s connection to Christmas, gospel seeds were sown that we know God will increase.



Eggstravaganza

We are grateful to God to have been able to host our annual Easter Eggstravaganza outreach in our community. Over 2000 guests enjoyed free egg hunts, food, moonbounces, and more. Through our self-sacrificial giving, our community was introduced to the church and the love of Jesus.

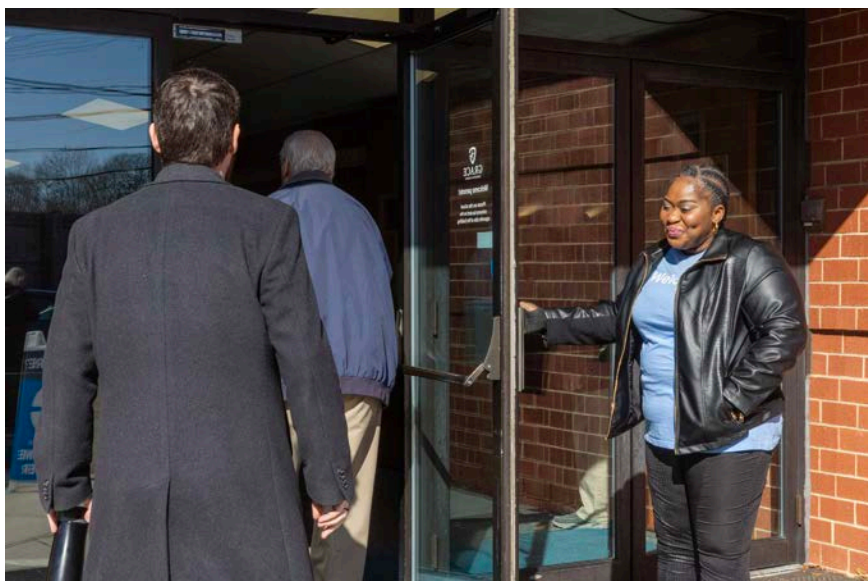


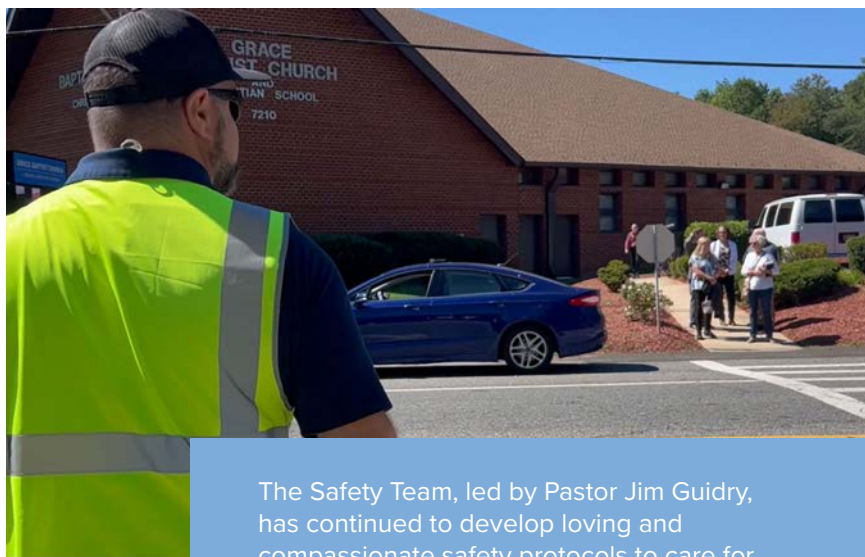
Connection Ministry

We are grateful for the forty-seven faithful volunteers who serve as hosts and ushers in this extremely important ministry. They are the “first impression” of our church for visitors and provide a friendly and knowledgeable welcome to Grace.

Volunteer Training

Dozens of our volunteers were trained this past Fall in “Gospel Centered Teaching of the Bible.” May we never lose our gospel focus as a church.





The Safety Team, led by Pastor Jim Guidry, has continued to develop loving and compassionate safety protocols to care for our congregation during various events. This year, with appropriate training, the team has expanded the pedestrian-focused traffic control to evening events.

Benevolence

By the grace of God and through the church's gracious giving we were able to help several families and individuals in our church and community with over \$40,000 of benevolence giving to help with rent, medical expenses, food, car repairs, home repairs and moving expenses.

Nursing Home Ministry

It was always a joyous time every Saturday morning when members of our nursing home team and residents at Autumn Lake Healthcare at Crofton worshiped the Lord together. We also enjoyed music from our faithful pianists Kathy Devito and Karon Joeckel, as well as from other singers and musicians from Grace.

Special Needs Ministry

Our Special Needs ministry continues to offer much needed love and support for around ten families at Grace, some of which are ministered to by 20 dedicated volunteers who provide one-on-one support during the morning service. The GBC family has embraced our Special Needs families, reflecting the love of God for every person as those who bear His image. One highlight this year was the Christmas Caroling that brought together our Special Needs Ministry, the community, and the church body with over thirty people participating, and twelve group homes or individuals visited.

Grace Gives Food Ministry

God's abundant provision has been evident through the distribution of food to 170 families each Saturday. Through conversations and prayer, the gospel is shared each week, and several families have now made GBC their church home. Seven Bible studies have blossomed out of the food ministry with community members and volunteers, including a Spanish-speaking Bible study that continues to grow. Praise God for the creative ways he works through this ministry.

