



Grace Today

What is “Mission 2020” all about?

In past months we unveiled a strategy to move forward in response to remarkable opportunities God has placed before us. Our strategy is called “Mission 2020”. If you missed all of that earlier this summer, go to

<http://www.cvillegrace.org/documents/Mission2020CoreValuesPrinciples.pdf>

Take some time with it and it will make some sense! Here are some further thoughts of mine.

Change is unsettling

Change inevitably brings discomfort and conflict in churches. We have made some changes recently at Grace and are making plans to make more changes- such as adding some staff in the year to help us move forward as a ministry. Being an elder-led church (rather than congregational or bishop led church), the elders have been at the forefront of the decisions to change various things we do. They have consulted staff and lay people, and formed committees that included deacons, elders, and other members to look at various matters (space, staff and church planting). Despite our efforts to communicate this as clearly as possible through the newsletter and two congregational meetings, there has been a bit of a delayed reaction as the realization hit that various things had changed, and more is to come in the future.

Engine of change

What is driving change at GCC? At the surface level, it is the significant growth to our area as in mid-2010 the Defense Intelligence Agency opens its doors to around 1200 employees (my source on that is the Chaplain at NGIC). There are countless other new jobs that will come to our area to service the needs of this government agency. If all of those families live nearby, that would represent a 12% increase in households in the area. We are trying to get ready to welcome these folks to our area when they come by making sure we have enough space, small groups, and ministry resources to handle growth when it happens- at

the surface level, that is.

So I guess you could say Uncle Sam decided to change things at GCC. I think there are motives causing us to prepare for the providential occurrence of growth to our region that go much deeper than that. Talking about growth itself can seem almost slick and seedy to some people- like we just want to build a big old church and so these new families will help us do it. And if our motives are simply to grow bigger as an organization, something is wrong with us!

The Core Values are the engine

Our core values of Gospel Witness and Gospel Discipleship are at the core of our efforts to prepare for the future. We are commanded by Christ to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20)- those are our marching orders which shape our values as a church. We are assuming that not every one of the new families that moves to our area is church and Christian. We assume that like the rest of the US population, many of these new folks don't live in a vibrant relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ. Yet, as is often the case, displaced people often look for places to meet friends and find community. Even though faith doesn't drive them, they may turn to the church- especially if neighbors and coworkers invite them to either a worship service or small group activity. Thus, many will drive up the driveway at GCC in the next few years. We want to be ready for them.

Crying shame

I think that the church and folks that move to our area are going to find a good church- ours or another in our area. I will welcome them and hope to enlist them in the ministry as servants of God here. But I want you to think with me about another type of person- the spiritually open person. This spiritually open person may have had a church or religious background years ago, but dropped it when it became optional. They move to a new area and find themselves feeling a need, and being open to looking to a church for solutions. You and I know that what they most ultimately need is a relationship of faith in Jesus Christ. We want them to find that. We all would feel honored and privileged to help them in that venture.

Wouldn't it be a crying shame if that person came to Grace and felt unwelcomed in some way? What if the nursery was overcrowded and they had small children? What if there was no place to park or sit and they either left without coming in or left afterward in a hurry? What if no one greeted them or talked to them before or after the service? If you knew that, wouldn't it sadden and anger you that we failed in such a terrific opportunity? I would feel sad and angry if that happened.

What if that same searching person actually came back for several weeks, and began looking for a small group- or as the case may be, the office staff begins helping to find them an appropriate small group- and every small group leader said- "our group is really packed-

we have 16 people already- I hate to say this, but can you send them elsewhere?" Wouldn't that literally be a crying shame? Why doesn't someone do something to plan for new groups to form, and for existing groups to be healthier and better connected to the church overall (great idea!)?

Thus you see where we've been going- adjusting things so we can ensure that as much as humanly possible we are ready to welcome and enfold all whom God brings near to us- and to encourage them in their growth in Christ. Adjusting service offerings, preparing to add staff in small group and other ministries, and beginning to think about what to do if our worship area begins to fill at both services (church planting) are some of things we've been dreaming and scheming about. See the Mission 2020 documents referenced above for more details.

Methodology versus theology

Are the changes to Sunday School and worship times, the plans for future staff, the dream to plant daughter churches the RIGHT strategy to plan for the future? I'm guessing some of you would say, "nope- wrong plan". Methodology is always open for review and discussion, and sometimes we don't know how something will work till we try. That is why the elders have committed to flexibility to make future changes as circumstances warrant- going back to old ways as needed. It is possible to pray and plan and guess wrong anyway! You are always free to talk to an elder or pastor and express a concern or share a suggestion of a better methodology. Who knows if the Holy Spirit might really speak through you to them?

As mentioned in last week's sermon, the Holy Spirit is always moving the church outward in mission. Methodology of doing so can be wrong, but the theology is clear...we are to move outward toward a lost, hurting, and dying world. Shouldn't we wait till we can solve other internal problems?- always a question that is asked. Evidentially not based on the Holy Spirit's track record- he took the early church in Jerusalem- still smarting from the cross and the resurrection, and grew it from 120 to 5000 in a few short years. Acts 6 tells us that they had their share of problems. We are not talking care of ourselves if we ignore those without Christ around us- we are neither shepherding one another well or discipling one another if we do that.

One of the ways God addresses the problems we have as a church and as individuals is to lift our eyes heavenward in the face of God-sent opportunities. We feel weak, inadequate, overtaxed physically and emotionally, and underprepared- and He sends us out to serve. His infinite resources supply our need, and we learn the truth of the promise that His power is made perfect in weakness. We have been strategically placed to respond to opportunities. It is at times uncomfortable, challenging, and stretching. I can't wait to see what God will do as we wait upon Him.

In Him,

Don

If you have questions or concerns about the changes coming to Grace, please contact one of our elders or elder apprentices:

Active Elders:

Rev. Don Ward, Jr.

Rev. David Saville

Jack Mellott

Jonathan Velasquez

Win Wood

Elder Apprentices:

Peter Edwards

Drew Fleming

Dave Hill

Steve Jerabek

John Kidd

Announcements

Fairmont Team Picnic

At last, we have the details for the Fairmont Reunion Picnic. Please look at the details below and let John Hooper or Steve Jerabek know if you have any questions. Spouses and family members are welcome to attend as well. Also, please pass this along to any past Fairmont team members who may be interested in seeing Carol Jean.

When: Oct 24th, 4pm-Until the Laymans kick us out!

Where: Laymans' House

What to bring:

Everyone: Please bring a folding/camp chair if you have one

Last Name Begins A-M: Please bring a two liter of soda and bag of chips

Last Name Begins N-Z: Please bring a side or dessert

Burgers and other common grillin' items will be provided.

Hope to see you there!

Fairmont Presentation

This Sunday, October 25th, between services, the 2009 Fairmont Team will be sharing a picture and video montage with everyone featuring their trip to WV this past summer.

Come share in this time of fellowship with the Fairmont Team. One of Fairmont's own residents will be the special guest on Sunday and would love to meet you and personally thank you for your support for our missions team.

We Need Your Help!

Saturday, October 31st, probably two and a half hours of work in the morning. Simply loading furniture and pre-packed boxes onto a moving van in Carodon subdivision of Ruckersville and then unloading in Forest Lakes. Four guys minimum, six would make the project go super quick. Contact Jerry Brewer to confirm.

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS NOVEMBER 1ST!

Don't forget to set your clocks back one hour Saturday, October 31st for daylight savings time.

Children's Church Changes

Starting November 1st, Children's Church (during the 11:00 service) will be condensed to one class serving ages 3 through the 2nd grade. Please make a note of this change.

Need a Babysitter?

If you are looking for a babysitter, there is a list of youth in our church interested and available for babysitting. To request this list, please call or email the church office.

Outreach Team

If you are creative, friendly, and want to reach out to our community, consider joining the Outreach Team. Shack Shelley is trying to get a core group of volunteers to form a team to lead and organize outreach events. If you are interested email Shack at lilshack@embarqmail.com.

Need Coffee?

Do you have 15 minutes on Sunday you can volunteer to help satisfy the coffee cravings of our congregation? We need people to either make the coffee before the early service or clean up the coffee supplies after the late service. This is a great way to serve with very little time involved. Please call or email Becky Barber if you can help.
bbarber3@hotmail.com

H1N1 Flu Update

In view of the concerns about H1N1 flu this season, please take precautions to ensure your health. Wash your hands and use hand sanitizer often and cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze. Also, if you or your children are sick, please stay home until you feel better!

Looking for a Small Group?

We have a variety of small groups meeting in various locations throughout the area. If you're looking to join a small group, please contact the church office (sdyck@gcchurch.com)

or see the small group list in the foyer on Sundays to find the group meeting closest to where you live!

GCC Meals Ministry

If you are not currently receiving emails from us asking for occasional help with meals for families at GCC and would like to participate in this ministry, please contact the church office, Monica Jerabek, Terri Wilson, or Maria Jones. The time commitment is only what you are willing and able to give, and the meals can be handmade or store bought!

Communion/Potluck

Our next communion/potluck will be held Friday, November 20th at 6:30pm. This time will be focused on missions, and Dr. Wright Doyle will be our guest speaker. Please mark your calendars for this informational time of communion and fellowship!

Family Advent Event

It's almost that time- our family Advent wreath-making event will take place Sunday, November 22nd at 4:00pm here at the church. Please mark your calendars and plan to bring the whole family!

Grace Institute

This winter will mark the beginning of our Grace Institute, a series of seminary-style adult classes. Be on the lookout for dates and times!

Women's Events

Person of Jesus Study

The next meeting of this study will be Wednesday, November 4th. Welcome and refreshments will be from 9:00am-9:30am, study will begin at 9:30am. If you need childcare, call Carol Hill.

Youth Events

CrossRoads

CrossRoads meets this Sunday, October 25th from 4:30-6:30! Come out and join us! See you there!

Sr. High Retreat Deadline

The deadline to register for the Senior High retreat is October 23rd. Cost is \$60. Retreat will take place October 30th- November 1st. Don't miss out!! Contact Dave or Shack for

details.

Youth Emails

If you are a parent or student who is not receiving the Youth Emails and would like to, please contact Shack Shelley to be added to the list. lilshack@embarqmail.com

Community Board

The Salvation Army Needs People Like You!

The Salvation Army of Charlottesville needs volunteers to be bell ringers and to help with Angel Tree ministries this Christmas season. For more information please contact either the church office (sdyck@gcchurch.com) or volunteer coordinator Lisa Chapman at 295-4058 ext. 118.