

Jonathan Edwards, the great preacher and theologian whom God used to bring revival to colonial America, wrote:

“I claim no right to myself, no right to this understanding, this will, these affections that are in me. Neither do I have any right to this body or its members, no right to this tongue, to these hands, feet, ears or eyes. I have given myself clear away and not retained anything of my own. I have been to God this morning and told Him I have given myself wholly to Him, I have given every power so that for the future I claim no right to myself in any respect. I have expressly promised Him, for by His grace I will not fail.

I take Him as my whole portion and felicity, looking upon nothing else as any part of my happiness. His law is the constant rule of my obedience. I will fight with all my might against the world, the flesh and the devil to the end of my life. I will adhere to the faith of the gospel however hazardous and difficult the profession and practice of it may be.

I pray God for the sake of others to look on this as self-dedication. Henceforth, I am not to act in any respect as my own. I shall act as my own if I ever make use of any of my powers to do anything that is not to the glory of God or to fail to make the glorifying of Him my whole and entire business.

If I murmur in the least at affliction, if I am in any way uncharitable, if I revenge my own case, if I do anything purely to please myself or omit anything because it is a great denial, if I trust myself, if I take any praise for any good which Christ does by me, or if I am in any way proud, I shall act as my own and not God’s. But I purpose to be absolutely His.”

The church is a sign and instrument of the kingdom of God, a people united by faith in the gospel announcement of the crucified and risen King Jesus. The mission of the church is to go into the world in the power of the Spirit and make disciples by proclaiming this gospel, calling people to respond in ongoing repentance and faith, and demonstrating the truth and power of the gospel by living under the lordship of Christ for the glory of God and the good of the world. —Trevin Wax



February 14, 2021

10:30 A.M.

A Conversion Community

VISION

2021

Our Mission Statement

Grace Covenant Church exists to glorify God in worship and to love and serve others through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Order of Service

Announcements

Introducing the ministry of Tim and Holly Howden

Welcome

Preparation for Worship

-----God's Greatness-----

The Doxology

Call to Worship: from Psalm 107:1-3, 8-9

Hymn of Adoration: "Come Thou Fount"

Prayer of Invocation

Hymn of Praise: "We Believe". Hooper/Fike/Ryan

Children are Dismissed to Sunday School

----- God's Renewal-----

The Law of God

Public Confession

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon and Comfort: Romans 8:38-39

Song of Renewal

"I Have a Shelter". Steve & Vikki Cook/Bob Kauflin

-----God's Grace-----

Scripture Reading: 1 Peter 2:9-17(ESV)

Prayer

The Sermon: Vision 2021

"A Conversion Community"

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Scripture Reading: Luke 22:14-20

Hymn: "Lamb of God". Hansen/Kauflin/LaChance

Prayer of Approach

-----God's Blessing-----

Parting Hymn

"I Will Follow". Tomlin/Ingram/Morgan

Benediction

God's Gracious Provision 1/31/2021

Offering: \$1878.00

Attendance: 46

Your offering may be place in the box at the Welcome Table.

The gospel moves us outward.

In our society of quick and easy joining and leaving, the idea that the local church is a place where one would invest one's entire life is a largely foreign concept. Nevertheless, the development of strong congregations, based without equivocation upon the word of God and the power of the gospel, is the necessary corrective to the unfortunate impression given by many churches—that they are franchises of the Christian corporate chain. We should pray for a recovery of true ecclesiology in our time — and know that it will come only through the corrective power of the word of God.

—R. Albert Mohler, president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Conclusion

Strictly speaking, the church is not sent out, but sends out workers from her midst. Our fundamental identity as church (*ekklesia*) is not as those who are sent into the world with a mission, but as those who are called out from darkness into his marvelous light.

The mission given to the stumbling band of disciples was not one of cultural transformation—though that would often come as a result of their message—but a mission of gospel proclamation.

To be sure, God's cosmic mission is bigger than the Great Commission, but it is telling that while the church is not commanded to *participate* with God in the renewal of all things—which would, presumably, include not only re-creation but also fiery judgment—we are often told to *bear witness* to the one who will do all these things. In short, while the disciples were never told to be avatars of Christ, it is everywhere stated, either explicitly or implicitly, that they were to be ambassadors for Christ (2Cor. 5:20).—Kevin DeYoung

Questions

- *The gospel moves us outward.* The gospel is a restless power. It challenges our comfort and prods us beyond the settled Christianity of an affluent society. What are the implications of the Gospel driving you to do about your part in a conversion community?
- *Are we known primarily as the people of the gospel?* Are you known as a person of the gospel? If not what needs to change about who we are as a church and who you are as you?
- Is our love, stirred up and manifesting itself in good deeds, evident and convincing to all? If not, why not? If it is, how is it evident and convincing to all? What is your part in this?

The Corporate Witness of the Church

We are a people assembled by God, united to his Son, adopted into his family, and governed in our worship by his Word. The Lord God is seeking a people, not merely individuals, to worship him in spirit and in truth.

Far too many Christians hold that their lives are their own, to live as they wish, protected by an inalienable right to privacy. The New Testament's call to follow Christ is diametrically opposed to this way of viewing church membership. The Lord and his apostles teach that our lives should be open letters read and circulated among all, edited in brotherly love by others.

—*Thabiti Anyabwile senior pastor of the First Baptist Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands*

Negative Ideas about Christ and Christians

The church in our day has the idea that people's negative ideas about Christ and Christians are primarily formed by what they read in the newspaper or watch on television. In truth, many of our neighbors are turned off from the gospel because of what they have seen in our churches. —John Folmar, pastor of United Christian Church of Dubai, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Are we known primarily as the people of the gospel?

Without question, social justice and political activism are the duty of Christians who possess a comprehensive worldview, and we need committed Christians to enter those areas as full-time vocations. But these worldly areas are not the domain of churches or organizations of churches. These affairs distract us from excelling in our one, unique calling and distract the world from hearing that one message they can only hear from us.

—*J.D. Greear, lead pastor of the Summit Church, Durham, North Carolina.*

Connect the dots between the gospel and godliness.

Titus 2:11–12 (ESV)

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people,¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,

The potency of the church springs from the clarity of our message. Without an authentic gospel—one that calls for our purity, grounds our witness, and inspires our vision for evangelism—we are indistinguishable from special interest groups that merely trumpet the latest cause. An obscured message or subtle cultural accommodation trivializes God's people and silences the church's witness. Without the gospel, the church just makes no sense.

Dave Harvey, President of Great Commission Collective

Upcoming Events

Tonight—6-8 P.M. Youth Group(Grades 6-12) meets at the home of the Deicherts for Bible Study and fellowship.

Wednesday, February 17 Coventry Warwick Lenten Service is available on youtube and can be viewed anytime after 7:00 P.M. Pastor Peter Detteline is the scheduled speaker for this week. The link will be on the GCC website.

Friday, February 19—Sunday, February 21

Youth Winter Retreat at Camp Sankanac. Join us for an exciting weekend full of fellowship, worship, games, and a practical study on relying on God in daily life. Pick up a flyer at the Welcome Table.

Sunday, February 21 6:15-7:15 P.M. (Note the change of date)

GCC Prayer Gathering at the House of Prayer
1300 High Street, Pottstown, PA

Tim and Holly Howden

Tim and Holly Howden are a missionary couple we will be supporting this year. They are with a ministry named DiscipleMakers. DiscipleMakers is a Christian campus ministry based in Pennsylvania whose goal is to raise up the next generation of leaders for the Church by training college students in Bible study, gospel-driven discipleship, and evangelism. They have a fourfold mission.



Exploring the Bible

We exist to assist people interested in learning more about the essence of Christianity, which is not found in morality or philosophy but in the story of the historical person, Jesus Christ.

Engaging The Campus

We seek to find ways to serve and improve the campus community. We also provide Investigative Bible Discussions for anyone interested in learning more about Jesus Christ.

Experiencing Redemptive Relationships

If you want to experience how the gospel of Jesus Christ can heal relationships, spur people toward authentic community, provide ample opportunities to practice forgiveness, and restore broken people, then we are the group for you.

Captivating The Heart

We were designed to find our fulfillment, rest, meaning, and value in the person of God himself. Christianity is about a paradigm shift to a new central captivation with the beauty of Jesus Christ.

Prayer/Praise.February 14, 2021

- Pray for Justine Schumaker. Justine is home from the hospital. The results of her tests show that she has only one kind of cancer; however, it has spread. She will have a pet scan this week and then a treatment plan will be decided upon. Please continue to shower Justine with cards and prayers. Justine Schumaker, 217 Cross Road, Gilbertsville, PA 19525.
- Pray for Koreen Mace's friend, Amanda. She had an emotional breakdown, and the family is asking for prayer for her to get the help she needs in the hospital. In addition, pray that God places a Christian counselor in her life.
- Pray for Donna Jenkins' friend, Jonnie. She had a CAT Scan done and found she has three blood clots. Jonnie will be on blood thinners for three months. Pray for healing for Jonnie.
- Pray for Ben Steinmetz's wife, Toni Steinmetz. She has pain and issues from diverticulitis. Praise that Toni is feeling a little better.
- Pray for safety for Nic Collins. The new variant of Covid-19, from South Africa, entered South Carolina.
- Pray for continued healing for the father of Koreen Mace and Gwen Conrad. Pray for Gwen as she has been caring for their father, who lives with Gwen and her family.
- Pray for Mike Row, who has a bruised rotator cup on his left side. Mike is doing a little better. He is still hurting and does not have a lot of movement. Pray for continued healing and relief from pain for Mike.
- Pray for Dawn Fleetman, whose stitches from her foot surgery, were removed on Tuesday. Pray that she will be not be out of work long.
- Pray for all our college students as they head back to school: Lulu Bocci (Bob Jones University); Nic Collins (S. Carolina School of Leadership); Brandon Crothers (Lock Haven); Tim Deichert (MCCC); Cassie Frame (Eastern); Macie Frame (West Chester); Marissa O'Connor (Pace University); Brenna Pritchard (Cedar Crest College); Dominique Viola (Penn College); Carena Williams (MCCC); Tyler Yensan (Military).
- Pray for Nic Collins, who will be going to Quito, Ecuador for a mission trip at the end of March. Pray for travel, safety, and no COVID. Pray for funds to be raised, as they will be helping in the capital with special needs children and teens.
- Pray for Jeremiah Mace, who is in a 9-month internship program. Please pray for continued healing for Koreen's family.
- Pray for Donna Plowfield's son-in-law, David, who is seeking employment in physical therapy.

Message

Vision Sunday 2021

Our Mission Statement

Grace Covenant Church exists to glorify God in worship and to love and serve others through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:9-17 (ESV)

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. ¹¹Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. ¹²Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. ¹³Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, ¹⁴or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. ¹⁵For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. ¹⁶Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. ¹⁷Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

A Conversion Community

We are to be a Church that in its core identity is simultaneously sent and sending. Our God is a missionary God who sends the church into the world.

The mission of the church is the task given by God for the people of God to accomplish in the world.

"The mission of the church is to go into the world and make disciples by declaring the gospel of Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit and gathering these disciples into churches, that they might worship the Lord and obey his commands now and in eternity to the glory of God the Father." Trevin Wax

Introduction

In talking about the mission of the church, we are not trying to enumerate all the good things Christians can or should do to love their neighbors and to be salt and light in the world. The issue at hand relates to the church as church. What collectively as Grace Covenant Church must we be about as God's people if we are to faithfully accomplish his purposes for us in the world?