

THE JOURNEY

2014 GRACE BIBLE COLLEGE



Comfort
OR OBEDIENCE

WHAT DOES GOD WANT?

INSIDE: BUILDING FAITH, INTEGRITY IN DOCTRINE AND IN PRACTICE, STAY THE COURSE



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

God takes each one of us through different stages on our journey, and our College is no different.

Whenever you set out on a journey there are challenges, sights, and blessings you did not anticipate at the outset. In many ways, the journey of the past year at Grace Bible College is captured in the pages of this magazine, yet there is so much more which could not be condensed into the edition you hold in front of you. God takes each one of us through different stages on our journey, and our College is no different. We meet many wonderful people along the journey who challenge us and bless us.

In the pages of our Journey Magazine, you will read the story of an alumna serving in Alaska; stories of students whose lives have been dramatically altered because they are at Grace; and stories of faculty and staff who pour their hearts into their work and students.

Our theme for the academic year is ***Integrity***. Dr. Phil Long has written an excellent article about integrity in

doctrine and practice. You will also see what it means to live a life of integrity at GBC as you read about our community of believers who strive to live out this challenge of “wholeness” faithfully in our beliefs, our words, our faith, and our service – according to God’s righteous design for us. This is part of our daily practice. We covet your prayers as you read of new employees who have been hired to carry out important responsibilities in God’s work at GBC.

Yes, we are growing in our student count, and therefore, we have an increased responsibility to personally minister to each student on campus. Our financial resources need increased support from individuals. Our faithful stewardship of all God’s resources is vital. We are building leaders every day among our faculty, staff, and our students so we can continually increase the ministry capacity of the College.

Please enjoy this edition and thank God for all He is doing through Grace Bible College to transform lives – in Grand Rapids, Michigan, across the United States, and around the world – in greater volume than ever before!

May all this be to the praise of His glory!

Ephesians 1:6, 14

Expecting Great Things!

Ken B. Kemper
President

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BUILDING FAITH

ONE BRICK AT A TIME

In the fall of 2011, Grace Bible College announced the largest capital campaign in our history, with a vision to revitalize our campus by constructing a new student commons at the front of the original campus between the O'Hair Administration Building and T.R. Huston Hall. Our Beyond the Bricks campaign set out to raise \$1.6 million to construct a new student commons and revitalize other parts of campus to create aesthetic beauty and enhance student life.

Once final architectural designs from Dixon Architects and construction costs from First Companies (our general contractor) were finalized, we felt the need to increase the campaign goal to \$1.7 million. In those first few months, we saw God's provision of many gifts and pledges. By the end of the spring 2012 semester, with funding of over \$1.1 million already promised, the board of directors approved groundbreaking and ordered construction to begin during the summer. It was exciting to watch demolition, construction, and remodeling occurring rapidly during the summer months in order for everything to be ready for students arriving at the end of August! Additional work was completed in the Jack T. Dean Academic Center, creating office space and updating student work areas.



When students arrived back on campus, they loved the new commons area, complete with comfortable seating and an inviting stone fireplace, as well as the new Kahawa coffee shop. Students were able to walk safely between buildings with the improved sidewalks and updated lighting, and the boulevard entrance to the campus definitely made an impression on everyone. In October of 2012, the board of directors approved renovating the lower parking lot in front of the O'Hair Administration Building, increasing the number of parking spots to accommodate our growing student body.

By the final year of the capital campaign, the decision was made to increase the final phase of the campaign by \$200,000. This brought the total project cost to \$1.9 million, and would address some much-needed updates to the Aldrich Athletic Center, which were not part of the original campaign. We sought to engage additional friends of the College to support this vision and raise the final \$600,000 to complete the original goals, plus address the athletic center updates.

By the summer of 2013, the completion of the three-year Beyond the Bricks campaign allowed the board of directors to

move forward with plans for the upper parking lots, walkways, lighting, a beautiful plaza in front of the Baker Chapel, and a portion of the Aldrich Athletic Center renovations. The final \$50,000 needed to complete the renovations and upgrades in the athletic center has not yet been received, but as God supplies these funds, the upgrades will be completed.

So many people are deserving of thanks for helping with this campaign. Thank you for participating by giving of your resources to help this campaign be a success! We especially wish to thank the campaign cabinet who regularly met together to explore ways to finance this wonderful vision. Another big thank you goes to Rick Velting, the chairman of our board of directors, who led the cabinet and guided the construction project. Campus personnel Brian Sherstad and Nathan Johnson gave their strongest efforts and their hearts for this project, and without their support, it never could have happened. Greg Heath and Steve Hilbrands solicited many folks to partner with the campaign and were so vital to its success. Thank you to our students

The College is especially thankful for the campaign cabinet, who met together on a regular basis to explore ways to finance this wonderful vision. A big thank you to Rick Velting, chairman of our board of directors, who led this cabinet and guided the construction project. Campus personnel Brian Sherstad and Nathan Johnson gave their strongest efforts and their hearts for this project, and without their support, it never could have happened. Greg Heath and Steve Hilbrands solicited many folks to partner with the campaign and were so vital to its success.

who willingly endured the inconvenience of construction because of their excitement for the finished product. Thank you to our alumni who can now return to GBC and see the progress being made for the next generation. And, thank you to our board of directors for your vision and leadership to move forward in faith, trusting in God's timing and provision.

Today, the GBC campus is revitalized and has a freshness that was not present three years ago. We praise God that over three hundred students walk the

halls and park in the parking lots daily! We prayed for and prepared for growth, and God has grown our College! We give all the honor and renown to the Lord God Almighty who gave the resources, the vision, and the faith to the many donors and friends who made it a reality. It is for His glory and for His ministry that we serve. Each and every brick is a tribute to God's greatness, yet, His glory is way "Beyond the Bricks!"





THE CULTURE OF OUR COMMUNITY: MINISTRY AND COACHING

Christian Ministry

To facilitate the many ministry opportunities for our students, Jim Gamble was brought to campus as our Christian Ministry Coordinator. Jim's passion for students and ministry is evident in his previous roles before coming to Grace. He served with Grace Ministries International for two years in Puerto Rico and also worked with campers at Grace Adventures. In fact, while serving at Grace Adventures, Jim ministered to GBC students during freshman orientation, and was also involved with students while in Puerto Rico during two GBC mission trips. This year, Jim is organizing four ministry trips for students.

Freshman Ministry

While serving in local ministries is not a new thing for GBC students, serving at the same ministry with about 100 of their peers is a first! Last fall, GBC partnered with One Wyoming, a local ministry whose goal is to recruit over one thousand mentors for children in Wyoming Public Schools. Our freshman class is meeting nearly 10% of this goal by themselves.

Each Tuesday, school buses arrive on campus to transport the freshman class to the Godfrey-Lee Early Childhood Center and Elementary School. Students were matched one-on-one with a child. Not knowing what to expect, some of the freshmen were nervous at the first meeting, but nerves quickly took a back seat as they got to know their mentee and spent time together. Students meet with their children for an hour each week - helping with homework, playing games, reading books or just talking. It is exciting to see GBC students setting a solid example for these kids! Our students are learning they can impact people's lives now, even as freshmen!

Upperclassman Ministry

While it is exciting to see the freshman class beginning their ministry time at GBC serving together, it is just as exciting to see growth in students who have served and ministered throughout their education at GBC. Senior Shelby Manson is one of these students. As a freshman, Shelby led a small group of middle school girls at her church and she was able to serve her church as an intern that summer, leading the entire youth group.

Looking back through her time at GBC, Shelby sees how God prepared her for all sorts of challenges, through leading ACT (Applying Christ Together) groups, taking on increasing roles in leadership and ministry, and serving as a worship leader. She knows her experiences at GBC have helped her develop the skills she will need to minister throughout life. Her future desire is to lead worship at ministry conferences, specifically for women.

Community

We are blessed to have Kyle Bohl serving as Dean of Students! Kyle graduated from GBC in 2004. While a student, he served as a Residence Advisor, played basketball, and was a student leader in many areas. He comes to us after several years at Creative Technology Academy, where he taught, then served as assistant principal. His love for the Lord and his love for GBC students is evident. His desire is to see each one grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ, and in who they are as a person. One of the ways Kyle and others on the Community Life staff are able to encourage this growth is through the medium of coaching.



Christian Ministry plays a vital role in the “GBC Experience”



A Culture of Coaching

In the past, when a Community Life staff member was approached by a student for advice, they would respond with advice or suggestions they thought best. But now, with the Center for Empowerment Coaching located right on campus, the Community Life staff has learned a great new approach! All Community Life staff members and student leaders have completed a two-day coaching training. They have all seen first-hand the benefits of coaching when working with students. The residence advisors are on the “front line” of Community Life, and it can be daunting for them to try to have all the answers for the many issues students experience. The coaching model frees them to give attention to the need, and coach the student to find a solution.

In addition to the two-day training, Kyle enrolled in a six-month certification program, and it has transformed the way

he works with individual students as well as the student body. When he coaches a student, he asks probing questions to help them, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, find solutions to the problems they face. This is strikingly different from the usual mode of giving advice. When

At Grace, students are able to serve in many capacities -- in local churches, on campus, in the greater community, even around the world!

GBC students will log over 4,500 hours of service this year!

coached, students learn to identify resources for themselves and explore their options. It allows the student to take full ownership of the situation and discover possible solutions for themselves. This alleviates any pressure on the coach to have the right answer for the myriad of student issues and questions. It also opens new lines of communication with students. The old method of thinking assumes a relationship with the student is necessary before they will be open to coaching. New thinking says asking the right coaching questions, with an

open invitation to talk, is an effective way to initiate a relationship with the student!

The coaching model is an example of delayed gratification. It often takes more time, especially at the beginning, than would simply giving advice. Telling a student what to do may be more time efficient, but it does not move the student toward growth. Coaching believes in the ability of the student to make good deci-

sions. Of course, coaching does not work in all situations – coaching is for the willing. When students are simply looking for a bottom line answer, coaching questions may increase their frustration. However, the real bottom line is that coaching has transformed the way Community Life interacts with students, and it is making an incredible difference on campus! Read on to see the impact of coaching on our campus and in our community.

(continued on next page)

THE CULTURE OF OUR COMMUNITY: MINISTRY AND COACHING

Coaching Makes A Difference!

As you have read, coaching is increasingly becoming part of the culture at Grace Bible College. The GBC Center for Empowerment Coaching is training people to coach, and it is making a difference...

...With Staff

"I know that coaching has impacted my ministry because now I am able to focus on the person I am coaching, rather than putting my time and energy into thinking of a solution for the person."

Kyle Bohl

Dean of Students, Grace Bible College

...With Students

"Instead of giving advice, I now ask questions and help the other person problem solve. That's a ton more effective than what I used to do."

Nicole Clark

Community Life Intern, Grace Bible College

"Coaching is actually just a way to practice servant leadership."

Adam Renberg

Pastoral Ministry Student, Grace Bible College

...With Faculty

"Coaching training has been a fabulous expression of what servant leadership and humility looks like. The concepts taught in this material



will transform the way one does shepherding/pastoring. I am so excited to see coaching become a part of the training of the next generation of leaders at GBC."

Gary Spykerman

Vernon Schutz Chair of Pastoral Ministry,
Grace Bible College

...With Organizations

"I have thoroughly enjoyed empowerment coaching certification. I have loved the practical hands-on training. It is truly a blessing to be used by God to impact those I am coaching, while learning to be a more effective coach!"

Ben VanderKodde

Program Director, Grace Adventures

...With Pastors

"I enjoyed it more than I expected. It made me look differently at things,

especially small group ministries. It fits our ministry of making disciple-makers and our equipping model of church."

John Lowder

Pastor, Frontline Bible Church

...In the Business Community

Davenport University is now partnering with Grace Bible College in order to offer programs to their corporate clients requesting coach training.

...For You!

Would you like to know more about coaching and how it can impact your life and ministry?

Please contact Tim Cosby at tcosby@gbc.col.edu or go to www.gbc-cec.com for more information.



CENTER FOR
EMPOWERMENT
COACHING

EXPERIENCE TRUE GRACE



**CALL US AT 616.538.2330
FOR MORE INFORMATION.**

When I first visited GBC, I didn't know what to expect. I drove past the many businesses and restaurants on 28th Street and followed the green signs leading to Grace Bible College. As I entered the neighborhood and followed the winding roads, I wondered what this place was really all about. I had read the material and thoroughly browsed the website, but things are often different in person. Happily, I found out that Grace Bible College really was what it claimed to be: a community where students are prepared to serve Christ in church and society.

Many people have this kind of experience when visiting Grace Bible College for the first time. GBC has been blessed with several years of increasing enrollment, which means more students are gaining a strong biblical foundation in addition to their chosen major. At a time in history where truth continues to be compromised, we need young men and women who know the Word of God and how to apply it to all areas of life. God is using GBC to raise up leaders, and it is exciting to observe!

In the past year, over four hundred students and families visited GBC and we had over three hundred students submit applications to attend. As you can imagine, our enrollment office is very busy, working hard to find students who are the right fit, and doing our best to give prospective students the most accurate picture of GBC as possible. We know, however, that it is not our effort which draws students to GBC, rather it is God blessing this campus community as we strive to live out our mission together.

Students are being prepared to serve Christ while they are in the classroom, residence hall, athletic field, chapel, or in any other area. Faculty and staff are dedicated to helping each student succeed and live a life of integrity. Small groups in the dorms and during chapel time provide opportunities for students to be vulnerable with one another and find encouragement as they allow the Lord to work in and through them. Our athletes learn the important lessons of diligence and hard work as they pursue excellence in their sport and their academic life. When students come to chapel, something powerful happens as our community joins together, listens to the Word of God, and offers up praise to Him. God is at work on this campus, and we would love to have you join us.

So... join us, and experience the GBC community for yourself. If you are interested in getting a little taste of college life at GBC, you can schedule a personal campus tour or plan to visit during Fridays@ Grace, the Expedition, or the Blitz. Our mission is at the heart of all we do. Talk with our caring and competent faculty about the latest in their programs. Join us for chapel and experience a room full of students engaged in genuine worship. Tour campus and hear your GBC tour guide's personal story. Whether you have never set foot on the campus or know it like the back of your hand, we hope you will take time to visit. We believe you will find - like so many others have - that Grace Bible College is personal, caring, and preparing students to serve Christ. We can't wait to see you here!

WE HAVE A VISIT DESIGNED FOR EVERYONE!

Register online today and find more information at www.gbcol.edu

PERSONAL CAMPUS VISIT

Contact us to schedule a visit based on your availability and desires.



**A larger visit day complete with chapel, a tour, lunch and much more.
2014 Dates: Oct. 17,
Nov. 7 or 21 and Dec. 5.**



**An action-packed weekend for high school students.
Scheduled April 10-12, 2014.**



**An all-nighter for junior high youth groups.
Scheduled Sept. 19-20, 2014.**

Comfort OR OBEDIENCE?

If there is one thing that I have learned over the years, it is that God does not want us to be comfortable; He wants us to be obedient.

Lisa Kleynenberg
GBC Class of 2009

Growing up, I wanted nothing more than to be a teacher. As I progressed through elementary school, I realized I also wanted to be a missionary. I thought I had my life figured out and needed to choose one occupation: I chose teaching. As I began my journey at Grace Bible College, little did I realize I would be able to pursue both passions!

I graduated from GBC in 2009, hoping to obtain a full-time teaching position. Any teaching position! At that time, many teachers – inexperienced newcomers as well as seasoned veterans were vying for the same positions across the nation. In a plea of desperation, I prayed, “God, I’ll go anywhere to teach! Please, just help me find a job!”

In my “last ditch effort” to find a teaching job, I sent my resume to several schools in Alaska. [I have always said I would never go to Alaska. After taking a family vacation there following high school, I remember telling my mom, dad, and brother, “I will NEVER come back to Alaska. It’s too cold, rainy, and depressing.” And, this was the weather in July!]

A month later, with no job prospects on the horizon, I interviewed over the phone for a job in Alaska one week before their school year was to begin. If there is one thing that I have learned over the years, it is that God does not want us to be comfortable; He wants us to be obedient.

I was offered the job and given ten days to get things in order and move

my life from Wyoming, Michigan, to a remote village located in the interior of Alaska called Nulato. I had many conversations with important people in my life. After a lot of prayer, I remembered Abram’s experience in Exodus 12 – he was told to pick up his life and move to the unknown. I also was reminded of the speech I had given a few months earlier at the GBC commencement ceremony: watch for every opportunity, let go of your dreams, let God take control, and embark on the greatest adventure of your life! All of these thoughts raced through my head and I knew what my decision had to be: unfortunately, my heart did not want to agree. But, I knew I needed to be like Abram no matter how terrified I was about uprooting myself from everything and everyone I knew. I reminded myself that fear is not of



the Lord, therefore, I could not let fear dictate my decisions. I packed up my belongings and got on a plane.

Nulato's small community sits along the mighty Yukon River about 310 miles west of Fairbanks, Alaska. You can only access the village by plane or boat, and the population is predominately Athabascan. Traditionally, this culture was nomadic, traveling in groups to hunt, trap, and fish. This subsistence lifestyle is still practiced in combination with the westernized lifestyle brought in by Russian traders and missionaries. Forty students make up the K-12 school, and I would be teaching ten high school students in every subject area.

This was certainly not the plan I had intended for the beginning of my teaching career! However – as usual – God intervened and showed me that His plan was much greater than mine! My first year was merely about survival. I was in a culture I knew nothing about and teaching subjects I was not prepared to teach. I was thousands of miles away from everything I knew. I was the minority. I had to figure out how to understand this culture so different from my own. After many failures (and very few successes) that first year, I decided to turn one year into two – simply because I was stubborn and was not about to let a bunch of high school students dampen my desire to teach due to my own fears and feelings of inadequacy.

It is now 2014, and I am now in the middle of my fifth year of teaching grades 6 -12 at the Andrew K. Demoski School. Somewhere along the

line, the stubbornness that forced me to stay after that first year transformed into a desire to invest in the lives of my students as well as the community. The relationship I have with my students has blossomed into much more than I ever thought I could experience as a teacher. When their hearts break, my heart breaks. When there is a reason to celebrate, I am the first one to throw an in-class party or pass out the high-fives. When life crumbles around my teenagers, I try to pick up the pieces, holding them closely to my own heart. Oh, how much greater God's plan is! I have been able to share my faith with my students in ways I never imagined! Through curious questions during class, we've discussed forgiveness, life choices, faith, and heaven and hell. We have had meaningful conversations about who God is and what He has done. When words cannot explain, I hope answers are conveyed through my actions as a Christian woman.

“Oh, how much greater God's plan is! I have been able to share my faith with my students in ways I never imagined!”

Since moving to Nulato, I have learned a lot: I can mush dogs, gut a moose, cook moose soup for one hundred people, juggle teaching fifteen classes

in a six hour school day, skin beavers, and dress to go ice fishing in -30° temperatures. I have been amazed by some of the most beautiful scenery in God's creation – whether I'm flying in a plane with my cross country team to a meet 100 miles away on the coast – or sitting on the back of a snowmobile with a gun strapped to my back in search of a good fishing spot. I have laid out under the stars, staring up at the northern lights as they dance across the night sky, and I've walked through fields of wild blueberries on a sunny, cloudless day. Most importantly, I have seen the power of prayer: for my students, for their families, and within my own life. I have learned what unconditional love looks like – as I continue to grow in my love for my students and my community – regardless of what circumstances arise. In some of the most heartbreaking situations imaginable, I have felt at peace when a student asks me to pray for them. I've been humbled when students visit for meals and they remind me to pray because they know it is important to me or when my foster kids ask me what we're going to read in our morning devotions before school. I have grown in my dependence on Christ, learning to lean solely on Him. This is a lesson which has proven invaluable over the past five years.

Teaching isn't simply my job. Teaching is an avenue through which I can minister and live out God's calling on my life. “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me” Galatians 2:20.



STUDENT SNAPSHOTS

Who is the “typical” Grace Bible College student?

What attracts a student to Grace – and what keeps them here?

Does their time at Grace influence what they do with the rest of their lives?

It would be easy to publish the demographics of the GBC freshman class or statistics about upperclassmen and recent graduates, but that information would not be much different from that of any other institution of higher education. If you want to know what makes GBC students different, you need to know our students. Consider this your introduction to Denise, Jared, and Hannah!

These student snapshots will give you a glimpse into the heart of Grace Bible College and our students, showing why they are different – and why they will make a difference in our world!



Denise Van Beek

*Sophomore Student
Holland, Michigan - Human Services*

When I began college, I had no serious conviction about where to go. I picked Michigan State University and majored in pre-med and diagnostic molecular science. I missed the “college experience,” because I stayed in my dorm room when I wasn’t working. Late in the semester, my advisor informed me the degree I was pursuing would probably not be relevant or marketable by the time I graduated. In a random online search for colleges, Grace Bible College popped up on my screen. Even though Grace didn’t offer a comparable program, I couldn’t get Grace off my mind, and I decided to visit.

When I stepped on campus, I knew I needed to be at Grace Bible College. Unfortunately, my mom felt differently. She told me that I didn’t fit at Grace because I was not brought up in a church and had a past. Even though my mom did not approve, I decided to attend Grace.

In January of 2012, I began my studies at GBC in worship arts, not really knowing why I needed to be here. Through my classes and conversations with professors, I learned more about mission work and prayed for an opportunity to experience this type of ministry. That summer I boarded an airplane for the very first time (alone!) and went to Tanzania (alone!). My mom cried the entire time we were in the airport.

My trip to Tanzania changed my life; God showed me my calling! I changed my major to human services so I could prepare myself to return to the mission field. Since then, my mom has seen the tremendous change in my life. Now, she loves GBC and knows it has helped me to discover and become who I am. When I told her of my desire to do full-time mission work, I prepared myself for her upset tears. Instead of tears, she told me she expected this news and was glad I was listening to God’s calling on my life. She also hopes my sister will consider GBC when she graduates from high school! What a change!

With my remaining time at Grace, I want to invest in this place – mentoring others, and taking advantage of other opportunities offered by life on (and off) campus. So many people have encouraged me in my spiritual growth and relationships. I have received so much love and support here!



Jared Kusz

*2013 Pastoral Ministry Graduate
Muskegon, Michigan*

Roughly ten years ago, I was an obnoxious, inappropriate, “class clown” middle school student. I was also beginning my journey towards the cross of salvation after my good friend, Taylor Reed (son of Dan and Mary Sue Reed, GMI Missionaries in Bolivia) invited me to the Berean Church youth group in Muskegon, Michigan. As I regularly attended, the youth pastor, Rick Pilienci, saw through my external facade and flippant attitude and noticed something special in me. He invested countless hours of time and prayer into my life. Because of the grace of God working through Rick Pilienci, I became a Christian, and desired to minister to people for the rest of my life.

I decided to attend Grace Bible College because of its specific doctrines and its affiliation with my home church. While attending GBC, I developed an understanding of who God had created me to be: a pastor! God used Grace as

a tool of transformation and growth as He continued to prepare me for a life of pastoral ministry. Through Dr. Mat Loverin's theology classes, I learned to think for myself as a theologian – tearing down non-biblical constructions and myths to which many Christians still cling. In Bible classes with Dr. Phil Long, I learned to love the art and science of Biblical studies. The daily example of Pastor Gary Spykerman taught me how to love and shepherd God's people.

The first time being called "pastor" felt real for me was at a men's breakfast during my internship at Grace Bible Church in West Allis, Wisconsin. Pastor: this is who I am and who I will forever be – an under-shepherd seeking the will of God and the glory of my Savior, Jesus Christ. I am thankful for the opportunity to preach, study, and grow with the support of those dear brothers and sisters in Christ in West Allis. Serving alongside such great men of faith (Pastor Les Takkinen and Pastor Randy Brown) has deepened my appreciation for discipleship and mentoring relationships.

Through godly men, I was led to Christ, called to ministry, and instructed in the ways of the Lord. Through a small, humble, Bible teaching and believing college, I discovered God in a way far richer and deeper than I ever thought possible! God's grace is the greatest gift one could ever receive! I was lifted out of death and given life through faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is a testimony of God's mercy that a sinner like me can boldly preach the Word of God! In all kinds of trials and sacrifices, God is faithful. God is always faithful!



Hannah Lange

Senior Student

*Little Falls, Minnesota - Business Studies/
Accounting, Information Management*

When I look back at what brought me to GBC, I am still amazed that I even made the decision to come in the first place! I was graduating from a community college near home and was investigating transferring to a business school. Like many others, I had never heard of Grace Bible College. And, I wasn't interested in pursuing "ministry." I'm not a music major, I'm not a missionary kid, and my dad is not a pastor. But, those things didn't matter because God's plan for me was different all along! I first learned about GBC from an old postcard my parents received when they attended a conference, and I knew this was where I needed to be!

I vividly remember my first Sunday here. As a student body, we went to Grace Adventures for "The Grace Experience." I was scared out of my mind, homesick, and miserable! I thought I had made the biggest mistake of my life in coming here. Although I grew up in a Christian home, I wasn't interested in studying the Bible or pursuing a personal relationship with Christ. Even

after years of attending Sunday School, Awana, and youth group, I didn't even know if I was saved or not! Then President Kemper spoke about grace and immediately captured my attention.

I sat there crying. There I was – 18 years old – understanding the gospel message for the first time: salvation through faith alone! I don't think people realize that it is possible to "grow up in church" and never hear the gospel clearly presented. It wasn't until I decided to go to a small college twelve hours away from my home that I truly understood what it meant to be saved by grace.

Over the past two years, my classes and the chapels have helped me to develop my understanding of God's grace and love, and I know His grace is what started the change in my life. This understanding, along with the guidance and encouragement from the faculty and staff, has motivated me to actively seek God's will for my life, allowing Him to make me into the person He needs me to be. It has opened doors for me that I would have never thought possible two years ago, like the opportunity to be a residence advisor in the dorms!

I am thankful to be a part of a college community that makes a lasting impact on the life of every student who walks through the door. There are many things I will probably not remember about my time here, but I will never forget the faculty, staff, and professors who prayed with me, challenged me, and encouraged me to grow spiritually. And, I'll never forget that it is by God's grace that I have salvation through Jesus Christ!



ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

PRESIDENT KEN KEMPER INTRODUCES KIM PILIECI

During my ten years as President of Grace Bible College, Paul Sweet has led our academic program with dedication and focus, working tirelessly to develop and expand our program and leading faculty through various degree and concentration changes. During his administration, Paul completed his Doctor of Education degree through Columbia International University (a Christ-centered institution in South Carolina like ours). He has labored diligently with our two accrediting bodies (ABHE and HLC) to assure that our course of study is excellent and stands up to third party approval along with the best colleges in our land.

During the past year, Dr. Paul expressed his desire to return to the classroom full-time. It was challenging to prayerfully begin to make this a reality, but in the end, the Lord marvelously answered our prayers and allowed us to place Dr. Paul back into the classroom to teach full time in the areas of Christian Education, Bible Study Methods, Bible, and Education. Paul's background in pastoral ministry also allows him to cover Pastoral Ministry and Theology classes as needed. He remains our staff liaison to the accrediting bodies, and also works closely with Dr. Mat Loverin in the area of assessment. Paul is also a great asset to our new Academic Dean, Mrs. Kim Pilienci. I love to see God's work evident in the lives of His people. It is exciting to see God using Dr. Paul Sweet and others at GBC in their areas of passion and skill for His glory!

Before joining us at GBC, Kim worked at Baker College in Muskegon, Michigan, holding the position of Dean of General and Developmental Education. While at Baker, Kim progressed from teaching in the classroom to an administrative position. Our search committee approached her with the possibility of serving at Grace Bible College, and we were thrilled to have Kim accept the Academic Dean position. Her husband Rick currently serves as Pastor of Family Ministries at Berean Church in Muskegon, Michigan, along with Senior Pastor Craig Apel. Kim and Rick are originally from Long Island, New York, and have three school-aged children – Nicholas, Jennie Sue, and Timothy. Kim is presently completing her PhD in Higher Education Leadership at Western Michigan University, and brings strong qualifications to her new role as well as a love for Grace Bible College and the Grace Gospel Fellowship. I have asked her to share a little bit of her story in the space that follows:

My preparation to serve at Grace Bible College has been a journey of personal faith and professional growth. In 1996, my friend and coworker, Vanessa Tuttle, with gentle boldness, invited me to Eastport Bible Church (EBC). At that first church service, all the questions of this young girl growing up with Catholic traditions began to be answered. Pastor Rob Renberg presented the message of grace, and I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Savior. As our first child grew inside of me, I began to grow spiritually. As I was on complete bed rest for seven weeks, I used that time to search the Scriptures. My husband Rick, a New York City truck driver, skeptically and sporadically began to attend church with me. Rick was embraced by the "Ironmen" of EBC who invested in him and invited him to join the softball ministry, among others. Three months after our son Nicholas was born, Rick accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Savior! Pastor Gary and Sue Spykerman began mentoring us and they taught us – through their words and actions – how to put God first in our marriage, then one another, then our children...a concept that is now the foundation of our marriage. Pastor Charley Young invited Rick to serve in the youth ministry, and Rick learned of his calling to be a youth pastor. As we grew together as a young couple, we were surrounded by men and women who loved and served the Lord and were touched by the testimonies of those who committed their lives to serving Jesus Christ. One Sunday, Vanessa told me she thought that Rick and I would be the next couple from EBC to commit their lives to full-time

ministry. Excited about the thought of serving Christ, but fully content in my life as young mother and first grade teacher at East Moriches Elementary School, I began to feel God's call and peace about this new journey. With our belief that God was calling us to ministry, we learned about Grace Bible College where Rick could take the courses he needed to become a licensed and ordained Grace Gospel Fellowship (GGF) Pastor. Gary and Susan Spykerman drove our family to Grand Rapids, Michigan, to visit what would become our "new home" (for what I thought would be a year, maybe two at the most!). During this visit, we had peace that this was to be our new home.

The first afternoon after our move, while the house was still filled with boxes, we heard a booming knock on the front door, and an even more booming voice when we opened the door. Pastor Craig Apel had heard that "a New Yorker interested in junior high youth ministry had moved in" and he wanted to get to him before anyone else did! Living on the corner of the GBC campus in our Aldon Street home, our young family grew, our relationships grew, and our knowledge of the Scriptures grew. During our second year on campus, I was invited to teach a philosophy of education course.

While Rick pursued his studies at GBC, he served as part-time youth minister at Berean Church of Muskegon, our new church home. Upon graduation, prepared to serve Christ in church and society, Rick became

the full-time youth pastor at Berean Church. Pregnant with our third child, we moved to Muskegon. I continued to teach education courses at GBC and English courses at Baker College, while homeschooling our three children. In 2004, I interviewed for the position of Dean of General Education at Baker College, convinced to do so by Rick (who has always believed in me more than I have believed in myself). It quickly became clear that God had prepared me for this leadership role in higher education through my various ministries, my experiences, and my degrees. Over the next five years, as a dean at Baker College and as a doctoral student at Western Michigan University, I learned about the complexities of higher education.

The joys and challenges in my career were carefully orchestrated by God to prepare me for my position at Grace Bible College. I was convinced that I had been called to make a difference in my role at Baker College, but I realized that God used my time there to

prepare me to lead at GBC. During the interview process with President Kemper, it became clear that God's hand had prepared me for this leadership role in academics. Dr. Sam Vinton shared that as he read President Kemper's email regarding the transition of Dr. Sweet, he prayed, "Lord, who among us is prepared?" He then read the rest of the email, thankful that President Kemper already had a plan in place, and that God had been training someone from the GGF all along! I was amazed that I was considered by Dr. Sam to be "among us" within the GGF, and amazed that God's plan for GBC included me. I have been called to serve not because of who I am, but because of who Christ is in me. I am not a Bible scholar or a theologian (that's why we have faculty with expertise in each of their disciplines!), but I love Christ, follow His Spirit, and believe in the message of grace. To this call, I have responded with the words of Moses, "Here I am Lord, send me." I am honored to serve Him at Grace Bible College.



KIM PILIECI AND FAMILY

INTEGRITY

When architects design a building, one of the factors they must take into account is structural integrity. They know how the building will be used and take into account the stress the structure will take. If the building is designed poorly, then it could collapse. This happened in 1995 to the Sampoong Department Store in Seoul, South Korea. The five story structure collapsed because the building designers installed an air conditioning unit on a poorly supported rooftop. Early in the morning on June 29, vibrations caused by the air conditioning unit caused the building to weaken. When cracks began to appear in the ceiling the building managers shut the unit down, but they did not evacuate the building. The ceiling collapsed and crashed through the fifth floor killing 502 people and injuring over one thousand.

From the outside, the Sampoong Department Store appeared to be a well-designed building that was safe for shoppers. If anyone were to have looked at the plans for the building they might have thought that the building was correctly designed. But the building was fatally flawed. The placement of the air conditioning unit

threatened the structural integrity of the whole building and as a result, the building was a disaster waiting to happen. Even though the external appearance of the building was good, the internal design was flawed. Shoppers

Paul frequently refers to being given the gospel as a sacred trust from God; his commission to preach the gospel among the Gentiles is a calling from God.

were in danger every time they entered the building they had no idea that the building could collapse at any moment.

INTEGRITY IN I TIMOTHY

I Timothy was written to encourage Timothy to guard “sound doctrine” in a culture and a situation where the church itself was no longer interested in holding the essentials of the Gospel. When Paul urges Timothy to promote “healthy doctrine” he uses a medical metaphor. Paul’s leaders ought to be spiritually healthy.

Healthy doctrine is the only cure for the “unhealthy doctrine” of Paul’s opponents in Ephesus. By teaching the truth, Timothy will expose the false in the “other gospel” which is being promoted in Paul’s churches. The definition of “sound doctrine” in verse 11 is “the gospel which was entrusted to Paul.” This is not unlike the sorts of things we read in other Pauline letters. Paul frequently refers to being given the gospel as a sacred trust from God; his commission to preach the gospel among the Gentiles is a calling from God. To be “entrusted” with the gospel is a critically important concept in I Timothy. Paul was entrusted with the gospel, he has passed that gospel on to Timothy, and Timothy is now responsible for guarding that deposit of faith in the next generation.

PAUL’S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS

Paul had spent three years in Ephesus (Acts 19) and he established several churches in the city and trained others who planted still more churches in the region. Revelation 2-3 mentions six churches in addition to Ephesus which may have been established as a result

IN DOCTRINE AND IN PRACTICE

of Paul's three years of ministry in Ephesus. While it is impossible to know how large the church was in Ephesus when Paul left, we do know from Acts that enough people had joined the Christians that they were an economic threat to the silversmiths who made small models of Artemis (Acts 19).

After his time in Ephesus, Paul traveled to Jerusalem where he is arrested at held under house arrest in Caesarea for two years. He was then transferred to Rome after appealing to Caesar. The book of Acts ends with Paul in Rome under house arrest. Paul appears to have been released from prison after Acts 28 to continue his ministry in Spain, but he also visits churches he established during the earlier part of his ministry. In all, Paul is away from Ephesus for at least five years before he wrote I Timothy, perhaps even two or three years more than that.

In Acts 20, Paul's final words to the Ephesian elders predicted that there will be some among the Christians who fall away from sound doctrine and practice. Now Paul has heard that his fears for the Ephesian churches have come true and some elders have in fact

moved away from Paul's teaching and practice. The nature of the problems in the Ephesian churches may be a division between "Pauline congregations" and Jewish-Christian congregations. Paul therefore sent Timothy to Ephesus to encourage the congregations to "guard the deposit" which had been given to the churches.

INTEGRITY OF DOCTRINE

In I Timothy 1:3-7 Paul describes the sort of teaching which he cannot tolerate in his churches. They teach a "different doctrine." This is not a difference of emphasis, but rather a teaching that is contrary to what Paul taught in the Ephesian churches. The Greek word Paul uses here only appears in Christian literature for a strange or divisive teaching. The teaching of the opponents is "another gospel," but it is "of a different kind." Like Galatians 1:6-9, Paul is concerned that the churches in Ephesus were turning to a "different gospel" which is really no gospel at all. The opponents in I Timothy appear to be leaders in some of Paul's house churches who are Jewish Christians and are attempting to blend Christianity and Judaism in a way which cannot succeed and is antithetical to what

Paul taught when he founded these churches.

This helps us understand the urgency of the situation. This is not a legitimate variation on a theological matter. This is not an internal theological argument where both sides are based on the Scripture, such as the classic Calvinism vs. Arminianism debate. Rather, Paul is describing a form of teaching that is outside the definition of what it means to be Christian. By following the opponents, members of the local Ephesian churches are in danger of not being Christians at all, since they do not hold tenaciously to the core of the gospel Paul has already taught them.

The opponents of Paul in I Timothy appear to have spiritual depth, but Paul states that they are bad teachers who are purposely wandering from the truth, injuring themselves and anyone who follows them.

(continued on next page)

First, Paul describes the opponents as having devoted themselves to “myths and endless genealogies.” A “myth” almost always has a bad connotation in Greek. The false teaching is described as myth in I Timothy 4:7, II Timothy 4:4, Titus 1:14, and II Peter 1:16. The phrase appears twice in the pastoral letters (I Timothy 1:4; Titus 3:9), and may refer to the sorts of books which were popular in the Second Temple Period, haggadic midrash (allegorical reinterpretations of the Old Testament) such as Philo of Alexandria or books like *Jubilees* that sought to “update” the biblical stories to the Greco-Roman world. The genealogies are “endless.” The noun can refer to something that appears to be unlimited, such as the sea, but also to arguments that go on and on. Maybe this is a word which could describe reading the tax code: it seems to go on forever in endless, meaningless detail.

Second, the opponents have “swerved” and “wandered” into vain discussions. While this may be an error, the combination of words Paul used implies that this is an intentional departure from the truth. In fact, “wander” is a soft translation here. The verb means “to turn,” but with a violent connotation. Like the English word, this word is used in medical texts for “turning an ankle,” or even “wrenched” or “dislocated.” By swerving from Paul’s gospel, the opponents have injured themselves critically. Their “vain discussions” are empty; it is no more than fruitless talk that has the result of intentionally damaging the faith of everyone who takes part in

their talks. We all know people who can talk endlessly without ever saying anything much of anything. Think of a politician’s answer; there are many words without ever really answering the question!

Third, the opponents have the desire to be teachers without understanding what they are saying. They desire to be “teachers of the law” without really knowing what a teacher of the law is! Perhaps these are Hellenistic Jews who have some training in the interpretation of Scripture, but are not really doing it

Paul is clear elsewhere in I Timothy that there are non-negotiable doctrines that are essential for the preaching of the gospel and the health of the church.

correctly. A major theme of the pastoral letters is correctly handling Scripture. It is not that the individual Christian cannot read the Scripture with clarity, but that the person who tries to be a teacher is “more responsible” than the rest for what they teach. This responsibility means that the person who styles themselves as a “teacher” needs to fully understand the implications of what they are saying, since they could very well lead a congregation astray. If the teacher is already wandering off, then it is likely his congregation will follow.

The opponents of Paul in I Timothy appear to have spiritual depth, but Paul

states that they are bad teachers who are purposely wandering from the truth, injuring themselves and anyone who follows them. The core problem is that there is a lack of integrity between what they appear to be and what they really are. Like the department store in Korea, they might collapse at any time and injure all those who have followed them.

HOW TO PRACTICE DOCTRINAL INTEGRITY

In contrast, Paul’s goal is love, demonstrated by a pure heart, good conscience, and a sincere faith. Paul is giving instructions to Timothy which he intends to have him pass along to the churches in Ephesus (1:3). The goal is not to strengthen Paul’s authority or power in the community, nor is he creating a crafty argument that will convince the false teachers. His goal is spiritual formation of the leaders of the church.

First, the person who has integrity has “love from a pure heart.” Paul’s goal is first to express love for his congregations. Like a good parent, he loves the churches and wants the best for them, even if that is a difficult correction of wrong belief and practice. The heart is the inner person, the place where decisions are made, the place of rational thought. This is not (emotional) love, but a decision to act in a loving manner toward others.

Second, the person of integrity has a “good conscience.” Paul has in mind here a moral conscience, a phrase

which Paul uses in Acts 23:1 to describe his own clear conscience. A clear conscience is a positive moral characteristic, sometimes the word is translated as “good scruples.” This means that the leader who has integrity does not knowingly behave in a way that is inconsistent with the Gospel.

Third, the person with integrity has a “sincere faith.” Sincerity has the connotation of “without pretense” or “without guile,” perhaps “authentic.” The noun Paul uses here is an “anti-hypocrite.” For people of a certain generation, the classic image of a hypocrite is Eddie Haskell, one of the characters on TV’s “Leave It To Beaver.” Eddie was always polite and respectful when a parent or a teacher was watching, but as soon as he was alone with his friends, he was as disrespectful as he could be. The irony was that Eddie thought he was fooling everyone, but everyone understood Eddie was a hypocrite. That sort of hypocrisy is perhaps one of the greatest enemies of the church in Paul’s day, and it certainly is a ma-

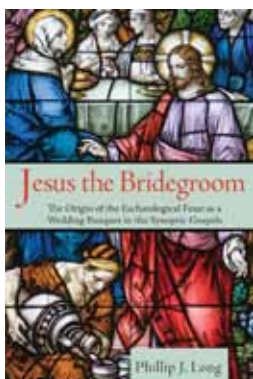
ior problem today. Like Eddie Haskell, when a Christian lives hypocritically, everyone seems to know it. People in the church are easily accused of lacking integrity because their inner person does not match the appearance they project. Paul’s point in I Timothy is that those who are in Christ are to be genuine and sincere. They cannot put up a front to hide some hidden agenda. One cannot profess a faith in Christ and then behave in a way that is inconsistent with that faith.

CONCLUSION

It is remarkable that Paul describes the leader who has “doctrinal integrity” in terms of what we might think of as spiritual qualities: love, good conscience, and a sincere faith. Rather than giving a detailed doctrinal statement, Paul describes the character of the good leader for the churches in Ephesus. Paul is clear elsewhere in I Timothy that there are non-negotiable doctrines that are essential for the preaching of the gospel and the health of the church. His concern at the outset of this letter is that

the leaders of the church demonstrate integrity by being what they really are. Frequently in both letters to Timothy and the letter to Titus, Paul emphasizes holding to the traditions which were already delivered to the church. This body of truth is called “sound doctrine” or “sincere faith” or simply, “the truth.” Timothy’s task included appointing good elders and deacons who would hold to the gospel which was initially preached in the city and be excellent examples of living out the Christian life so that outsiders would be attracted to the gospel.

What is sometimes overlooked is Paul’s solution to the problems in Ephesus. He does not recommend that more ecclesiastical structure be imposed on the local churches. Rather, he tells Timothy to appoint qualified elders and deacons, but the qualifications are fidelity to Paul’s teaching and high moral commitments.



PHILLIP J. LONG

Jesus the Bridegroom

Phillip J. Long has taught full time at Grace Bible College since 1998, specializing in Bible and biblical languages. He is presently the chair of the Biblical Studies Division. He attended Talbot School of Theology (BIOLA) where he earned two Masters degrees, one in Biblical Exposition (1996), and another in Old Testament (1998). In 2012 he received his Ph.D in New Testament from Andrews University.

He has led six tours of Israel for Grace Bible College students and alumni. His first book, *Jesus the Bridegroom: Messianic Banquet Imagery in the Synoptic Gospels* was published by Pickwick Books in November 2012, and is available at amazon.com.

**He blogs regularly at: readingacts.wordpress.com
and can be contacted via email at plong@gbcol.edu.**

THE GRACE *Of Giving*

IMPACTING STUDENTS FOR YEARS TO COME



CORRINE SONNEVELDT

CORRINE SONNEVELDT MADE IT HER PERSONAL MISSION TO IMPACT GBC STUDENTS FOR MANY YEARS TO COME.

Corrine Sonneveldt, a long-time partner with Grace Bible College approached us about establishing a student scholarship fund to be named after her family. This was the first time we had been approached by someone wishing to set up this type of scholarship fund, and we were delighted to work together with Corrine to organize it. In initial discussions, Corrine's heart for helping future students of GBC was apparent, and we began to lay out the process for accomplishing her desire.

During the process of creating the scholarship fund, Corrine passed away. But, because she had named Grace Bible College in her estate plan, we were

able, through the assistance of a close friend and family member, to move forward with her wish to create *The Sonneveldt Family Scholarship Fund*.

Corrine's desire was for this fund to benefit many students in the years to come by reducing their debt after graduation from GBC. She desired to see the fund continue to grow through her contributions and those of other GBC partners.

We are pleased to announce that this fund now exists, and we extend the opportunity to all who would like to make a gift to *The Sonneveldt Family Scholarship Fund*.



To learn more about how to create a scholarship fund named in honor of your family, or to honor Corrine Sonneveldt with a gift to this scholarship fund, please contact our Development Office at 616.261.8565. We would be pleased to help you with this!



THE GRACE NATION

The Grace Bible College Tigers again reached milestones and established themselves as one of the premier athletic programs in the NCCAA during their 2013-2014 season. With a record number of student athletes competing, the GRACE NATION continues to build momentum!



SOCCER

Men's soccer played one of its most aggressive and difficult schedules and turned in one of the best seasons in recent memory. Senior Chris Thompson was selected as the Kyle Rote Award Winner. This is the NCCAA's Most Valuable Player award based on play, character, and sportsmanship. Several team members were selected for "All-Region" honors as well. The women's soccer team exceeded expectations in its fourth season, receiving its first national ranking! Individual and team records continue to fall. The Tigers had four "Student Athlete of the Week" winners with both men and women winning this award. Team numbers were also at an all-time high.



BASKETBALL

Women's basketball began this season with high expectations and they have not been disappointed! They have proven to be the team to beat in the NCCAA Midwest Region, and clinched the #1 seed in the conference tournament. The men's team is considered one of the premier programs in the NCCAA, with five national championships in the last eight years. After playing a very difficult schedule this season including games against NCAA Division I, II, and III schools, the team progressed to the final four in the national tournament.



CROSS COUNTRY

Eight runners competed in various invitational events, competing with other colleges in 5k, 8k, and 10k events. They also ran in the Grand Rapids "Mud Run" and "Run Thru the Rapids." Freshman ladies Josie Lange and Dicia Wahl qualified for Division II Nationals and traveled to Cedarville, Ohio, to run in the national competition.



VOLLEYBALL

Women's volleyball fielded one of its largest and youngest teams in history (with only one senior!). They competed well and showed much improvement from the beginning of the season. Playing one of the most difficult schedules to date has this young squad geared up for the next season.



Our fan base is incredible and comes out in big numbers excited to support our teams. We broadcast or videocast most of our contests at www.grace-tigers.com, so check us out. We invite you join the GRACE NATION! Come to an event on campus or cheer us on from home! Either way, we appreciate your support! Go Tigers!

WORSHIP



ministering through the four years we attended GBC. Taking that initiative was a key part of my development.

What did you do after graduating in 2012?

During the summer after my freshman year at Grace, I began leading worship at a new church plant and continued that ministry through college. Because of my steady involvement, the church leadership asked me to become their full-time worship leader after graduation. After I graduated, I started the very next week full-time at the church where I had served as a student.

people through music in a way that is pleasing to Him.

Now, you are serving at Grace Bible College as the Worship Arts Facilitator. What does that mean?

I train students as worship leaders. We have excellent faculty members teaching music, Bible and theology. As students learn music and Bible, and I come alongside of them and say, "Now, let's pull it all together – leading and serving people through worship!" That is a huge and humbling responsibility. In every area of life, I need to exemplify what it means to be a worship leader.

How did you learn about Grace Bible College?

I looked at various colleges online and a website listed Grace Bible College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, which I had never heard of! I checked out the website, visited campus, and met with Dr. Werkema to talk about the worship arts program. The close community atmosphere appealed to me, so I applied and started classes that fall.

Did you feel GBC was the right place for you?

I did! I desired to be a leader and wanted to develop skills. In the second week of classes, I started a band (Sanctified) with other freshman students, staying together and

What were some of the differences between your role as a student worship leader, and full-time staff member?

That was big for me. I remember thinking about the significance of being a "pastor," and it weighed heavily on my mind. As a student, I had observed the shallowness of many involved in the current worship culture, and how it seemed to be "performance based" – with the "rock star" lights, sound, and technology all being used as part of a big production. I wrestled with wondering where the "ministry" was in all of this. During my junior year, I told God that I would let go of my musical calling to pursue pastoral ministry if that was His will. I sensed him nudging me that I could do both – to lead worship as a pastor serving

You are just a year out of college, Adam. How does that help you in your role at GBC?

I can share with students that I have been where they are! As a student, I took initiative to do things for myself, without having them automatically being done for me – and I can encourage them to do the same.

Our students come out of current American culture, and want to be worship leaders. What are some of the obstacles they must work through?

It is so easy for those in the worship industry to get stuck in the pattern of just "turning out music,"

ARTS

Brian Sherstad interviews
Worship Arts Facilitator Adam Wolf

getting caught up in the equipment or performance when the real calling is to lead people to the throne of God and worship Jesus Christ. Worship leading is to be done in humility. Obstacles which need to be overcome include the issues of self-glorification and pride. We do need to lead, which entails being "up front," but we must try to stamp out any thoughts of "ME" or pride. Our students know they will graduate from GBC prepared to serve Christ in church and society, so we aim to prepare students to do that with the right heart.

As you work with students of various class standing, what progression – or maturing – do you see in them as they move through the program?

There is a tremendous amount of growth occurring! It takes initiative on the part of the student to learn not only the skills of leading worship, but also the heart of leading worship. A freshman coming in who thinks he is "ready" to offer the world his "gift" of worship leading is very different than an upperclassman who understands what a life of service is really about. Student growth is important across the board at GBC. All our students are engaged in the community of Grace – attending small groups, participating in Christian service, with some even going on ministry or mission trips. All these areas help students mature in servanthood, and develop a heart for worship.

What is the vision for the worship arts department?

We desire to see students graduate with hearts prepared to serve – wherever they are called, whatever the culture – with an attitude of humility. They may not have everything figured out, but they will have the tools and training to do things in a professional manner with a servant's heart. Our goal remains the same: to prepare people to serve in ministry. We don't want to sell students short on what that means. I believe God will honor that when our hearts are set on Him and not on us.



Alumni

HOMECOMING 2013 RECAP



We were thrilled to see alumni, friends, and students gather together for an exciting weekend last October. Amid soccer and volleyball games, and the "Second Annual Mud Frisbee Tournament," there were some great athletic events to watch. Friday evening celebrated the conclusion of our "Beyond the Bricks" campaign with a banquet dedicated to praising God for His provision and faithfulness. And, of course, the alumni basketball games on Saturday evening were a crowd-pleaser, as usual!

Save the Date Now For Homecoming 2014 October 17 - 18, 2014

Please plan NOW to be part of the exciting events being arranged for Homecoming 2014! We are honoring the classes of 2014, 2004, 1994, 1984, 1974, 1964, 1954, and 1944. Representatives from these classes will be sought to help plan events and encourage others to attend! There will be many ways to connect with other alumni during Homecoming Weekend, including a banquet, sporting events, a special chapel, and much more! Please contact the Alumni Office if you desire to be a representative for your graduating class.

INTERACTING & CONNECTING

GET INVOLVED

We are beginning the process of establishing an alumni advisory board. This board will be important to help organize future events (like our recent family sledding event), provide much-needed advice and perspective to the Alumni Office, as well as provide an opportunity to serve other GBC alumni. If you are interested in becoming a part of our advisory board, please connect with the Alumni Office via phone or email. We love listening to your ideas for events and would love to meet with you to talk about being a part of our alumni advisory board.

WE NEED YOU!

As we work to build and solidify our alumni database, you can help us in another way! **WE NEED YOUR INPUT!** To be sure you receive information about upcoming alumni events, please send your updated information to the Alumni Office. If you have news (births, job changes, marriages, advanced degrees, or a memoriam) please send it, too. We care about you and want to know what is happening in your world – to celebrate with you and pray with you!



CONNECT!

To stay connected, join us on Facebook (Alumni of Grace Bible College) or contact the Alumni Office at alumni@gbcoll.edu or phone 616.261.8573.



GBC ALUMNI FAMILY SLEDDING EVENT
(FEBRUARY 2014)

PURSUIING THE CALL

As the Adult and Online Education (AOE) program at Grace Bible College matures, we are thankful to see the mission of the College being fulfilled in our students' lives and callings. Mike Deckman is an adult student who has excelled in the online program and graduated this winter. His testimony speaks to the exciting work God is doing through the adult program.



MIKE DECKMAN
GRISWOLD, CONNECTICUT
AA IN LEADERSHIP
AND MINISTRY

The AA in Leadership and Ministry degree program was an awesome and inspiring journey. From my very first class, I knew the Lord had sent me to GBC for a reason. The structure, length, and content of the classes fit perfectly into my busy schedule as full-time worker, husband, father, and church leader. The workload was challenging, but not overwhelming. I learned great things while studying: my faith increased, my love for the Lord grew, I gained biblical insight, knowledge, and wisdom. An unexpected benefit was that it helped me form and implement daily spiritual discipline, resulting in a closer and more intimate relationship with Jesus Christ.

While studying, I was engaged in various leadership positions at my church. I served as a men's ministry leader, the chairman of the board of deacons, and a Bible teacher. I was able to effectively lead my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ using tools I learned through my degree program. On many occasions, my classes seemed directly related to the work I was currently doing at my church! It was exciting to witness how I was able to lead others spiritually because of the knowledge I gained through my education.

As I move forward in my calling into pastoral ministry, I praise the Lord that I am eligible for seminary as a qualified candidate to begin a special program to earn my master of divinity degree. Four criteria are required to qualify this special program: one must be over 35 years old, have ministry experience, pass the verbal test, and hold an associate's degree. My degree from GBC has satisfied that portion of the criteria and has prepared me well for the next phase in my journey. My time with GBC was truly a blessing, and I pray that others will hear the Lord's call and pursue it. As leaders, we are called to "equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12-13 ESV). GBC provides their students with the tools to be effective leaders in the Body of Christ.

For information about Grace Bible College's Adult and Online Education program, please contact Zak Sorensen, AOE Director of Enrollment at 888.79.GRACE or zsorensen@gbcol.edu. You can check out the webpage at www.gbcol.edu/onlinestudies.

STAY THE COURSE

GRADUATION 2013



On a beautiful Friday evening in late April, Grace Bible College held a celebration to mark the graduation of thirty-six traditional students and our very first graduating class of twenty-six adult and online students. Once again, the venue was Sunnybrook Country Club in Jenison, Michigan. Everyone at the banquet enjoyed a wonderful time of fellowship, food, music, and testimonies focused around the theme of "Stay The Course."

On Saturday, April 27, the sixty-two graduates were honored at Rush Creek Bible Church, receiving their degrees from President Ken B. Kemper. There was great excitement in the packed auditorium as men and women of all ages and from all walks of life completed this milestone in grand GBC fashion. The adult and online graduate address was presented by husband and wife team Scott and Heidi Myers. Scott and Heidi each completed work to achieve their Bachelor of Science Degrees in Leadership and Ministry. Traditional students, Christina Mattias (BRE in Elementary Education) and Joseph Johnson (BS in Biblical Studies) delivered addresses as well. You will be able to read their addresses on the following pages. In addition, four special awards, named in honor of outstanding men of God were awarded to the following graduates: Mr. Jared A. Kusz (H.B. Prince Preaching Award); Mr. Joseph V. Johnson (C.F. Baker Biblical Studies Award); Mrs. Erin M. Kemper (T.R. Huston Christian Service Award) and Miss Melissa F. Pascoe (Vernon H. Stromberg Worship Arts Award). The Commencement Ceremony was followed by a beautiful reception for the graduates and their families.

(continued on next page)



STAY THE COURSE

GRADUATION 2013



SCOTT & HEIDI MYERS

When we think about the theme of this year's graduation ceremony – Stay The Course – there are a number of scripture texts that come to mind. For instance, Paul the Apostle speaks to focused courage when he confirms: "I want to know Christ... Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me... Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:10-14, NIV).

For the past few years, we have maintained a determined focus on the goal of finishing this course of study. But this is not the end, it is only the end of the beginning. Learning new and complex ideas is how we grow, mature, and gain understanding and wisdom, and we've learned that one of life's realities is that we are to never stop learning. In fact, the proof that we are alive and fully engaged is that internal drive that Paul speaks of.

We have never have done things the normal or conventional way. Just like this degree, we waited to finish until

much later in life. Yet, this is how God works when you are open to be in His service. He takes an impossibility and turns it into an opportunity for His glory. Life in Christ is Staying The Course, but that course can be an adventurous journey, causing you to rely on Him, molding you into what He wants you to be. It can be difficult at times, but it can also be the most thrilling ride of your life if you just say yes to Him.

Staying The Course means remaining in God's Word for a lifetime. There are always areas in our lives that need God's remaking and refining. Too often we pass through significant moments and only think of events as destinations rather than mile-markers on our journey. Let's celebrate, but understand that this is just a continuation of our pilgrimage. Because this is not the end, just the end of the beginning. We have decided that to be in the center of our Savior's calling, the learning will never stop. We must embrace becoming lifelong learners, and that everything we learn is not just for our benefit, it is for the benefit of others. We give what the Lord has entrusted to us to others. The purpose of our lives is to love our Lord and Savior, and to love those with whom we engage on a daily basis: our spouses, children, extended family, coworkers, friends and neighbors...allowing God's love to pour through us as we willingly serve them.

Staying The Course and becoming a lifelong learner will result in a reformation of thinking and a transformation of heart, so that we may give away what has been entrusted to us, for His glory and for His purpose. We want to challenge everyone to embrace the call to be lifelong learners, to be alert and awake, engaged and purposeful, hungry for wisdom and understanding.

A famous preacher once said, "Life is 10% what happens to you, 90% how you respond to it." So the question is: how will you respond to the call to Stay The Course? Are you willing to ask the Lord to show you what that would look like for you? Staying The Course is being open to change. We serve a God who will creatively move you toward His purpose for you, and remember that Staying The Course can mean changing course.

We asked the Lord to show us what changes He wanted us to make and the steps to take, regardless of how difficult they might be, and one of those steps was to finish our degrees and commit to continual learning. So, be willing to embrace lifelong learning. Open yourself up to the possibility of growing beyond where you are. There is no more rewarding and fulfilling place to be than in the center of His plans for your spiritual and emotional growth.



TINA MATTIAS

Change is inevitable. Our ages, interests, circumstances and emotions are constantly changing, whether we want them to or not. Grace Bible College is no exception, and I barely recognize it compared to when I started college. One of the most obvious changes is the

new student commons, which has elevated our sense of community and given our school a more home-like feeling. But, this change is only one of many.

Through all the changes, one thing that has remained constant throughout my time at Grace is the mission statement: Graduating Godly Individuals Prepared To Serve Christ In Church And Society. This is what a Christian college should have as its identity! With so much change surrounding me every day, I found one thing to be my anchor and keep my path straight: keeping Christ as my identity. Christ's consistency of grace, mercy, and love is the only thing that keeps me going in the right direction. It is a gift to serve an unchanging God, and because we are saved by and serve a God who never changes, we can put our identity in Christ.

Many people who do not identify with Christ are confused about who they should be and what their purpose is in life. Many students go to college to "find themselves" and figure out who they really are. This can be true for a Christian in a sense, because God does call us to do some sort of work for Him. There are many options for what we can do and become but I already have found myself, and hope every Christian can find who they are at their core, or they will never be satisfied with what they do. I know that I am a child of God and that He sees me as perfect, and because I love Him for forgiving me and looking past my inevitable faults, I have chosen to let Him work in my life through whatever job comes my way.

Our primary identity should be in Christ, from which our jobs and relationships will fall into place. People

identify with what they do for a living and their job performance, which can change from day to day. It's dangerous to define yourself through the eyes of your coworkers, or from your own overly critical eyes, because our core identity cannot change every day, and this leads to stress and feelings of inadequacy. Only God can define us and He will make us into whatever He would like us to become, and we need to trust and be satisfied in every circumstance and surrender our plans to Him. So my challenge to you, all of my fellow graduates, is to realize and live out your constantly changing life with your true identity at the front of your mind. Whatever role you have, however great or small, do not put this above Christ. Our lives will only have meaning when we realize our true identity and when we stop working so hard on our own to accomplish tasks and finally learn to rest in letting Christ accomplish them through us. As Christians, this is our identity, and it molds us and leads us through our life in Christ.



JOE JOHNSON

It's hard to believe that it was four years ago that all of us were standing in the chapel for orientation. Everything we had done to get accepted at Grace

Bible College had been individual, but now we were standing as a community. That community formed us individually, and while it is true that our identity in Christ never changes, who we are is formed by the communities in which we live.

Take exam week, for example. Exam week is stressful, but while there is a fearful anxiety in the air, there is also a hopeful spirit that only comes through community. Struggling alongside each other for that week brings us new life, because in the midst of struggle, heartache, and brokenness, being in community gives us real physical strength. Community forms us, it refreshes us, and it compels us to serve others. Community fuels us to serve each other and the world around us, because when we are filled with the love of Christ, it overflows to those around us.

Today we celebrate the community God gave us. Paul tells the Ephesians that "in Christ, we are being built together into a dwelling place for God in the Spirit." God dwells in our community in our love, in our interactions with each other, and that is something to celebrate. It is something worth taking from this community into the new communities we will enter.

We began this journey together on that chapel stage, realizing that life wasn't about us anymore. Now we finish together, partners in the gospel and prepared to serve Christ in church and society. I pray that as we go from this community into the ones to which God has called us, that we will continue to let those communities form us, refresh us and compel us to serve. Be lifelong learners, be secure in Christ, revel in community. Then take what He has given you – resurrection – and flood this world with new life.

ACADEMIC HONORS FOR SPRING, 2013

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Erin H. Befus – *San Antonio de Belen, Costa Rica*
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Leah M. Benton – *Sumbawanga, Tanzania*
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