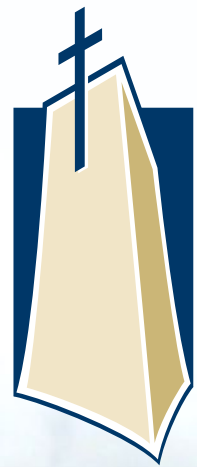


THE JOURNEY

2016 GRACE BIBLE COLLEGE



**COMING TO THE TOP OF
THE RISE: VISION 2016**

looking to what's ahead

NO GREATER LOVE

lifetime friendships
with life-giving sacrifice

WHO ARE YOU?

identity in Christ



FROM THE

President

Welcome to the next steps of the *Journey*! Life is a journey. The growth and development of Grace Bible College is a journey as well! Each of us moves at a different rate and through different challenges in our journey. Often we look back on these stages or seasons of life and work. Last year's *Journey* magazine highlighted GBC's 75 years of ministry. Since our beginning in 1939, God has used many dedicated people to lead, teach and work with students at MBI and GBC. I trust you will enjoy this edition as the articles communicate the many ways in which God has and continues to use this institution for His glory. Throughout the College there is a strong commitment to be Christ-centered and anchored to the Word of God. You will read of staff, faculty, students, and alumni who are making a significant difference in the world because of our core values. These values (being Grace in theology, Bible-centered, ministry-focused, and relationally transformational) make us who we are. This unique combination makes us a one-of-a-kind institution of higher education.

Grace Bible College received permission from our accrediting bodies and the State of Michigan to offer our first master's degree, and classes began in January 2016. Our MA in Ministry is an enlargement of our ministry, which fully upgrades our previous five year Bachelor of Theology degree to an accredited master's degree recognized by the highest educational bodies of our land.

We are completing our Vision 2016 established in 2011 with great energy to bring viability to our College and birth a new breadth of ministry and impact to a needy world.

Our theme on campus is *Identity* with an emphasis on our identity in Christ – “For me to live is Christ” (Philippians 1:21). We have consistently explored a multitude of very relevant topics based on the foundation of knowing who we are in Christ. The clear biblical teachings on same sex marriage or attraction, racism, emotions, Islam, and social media have been very engaging and helpful for our students, faculty, and staff. The consistent theme of finding truth and definition from God's Word as the anchor for our beliefs is refreshing and convincing.

Whether you received this edition of the *Journey* as a friend of the College, alumni, donor, or interested person, your journey also demands that you recognize your identity in Christ. You cannot go through life allowing others to define who you are. That is too painful and short lived! Jesus Christ knows you and died on the cross for you (I Peter 3:18). He gives you meaning and an identity that is eternal if you put your faith fully in Him (John 1:12). You can live your journey with confidence while all that is around you is falling apart if you believe the truth of God's Word. May God grant you wisdom and resolute faith in Him, clarifying your identity as you face the next steps of your journey and move forward into eternity as His child.

Expecting Great Things from our Great God!

Ken B. Kemper
President



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TOP OF THE RISE



COMING TO THE TOP OF THE RISE

Photo by Travis Heitmann

My family loves to hike and has enjoyed hiking together for years. Have you ever gone hiking and seen the trail ahead of you become increasingly elevated, indicating a big hill in the distance? As you slowly and excitedly work your way upward, your anticipation grows as to what you will see when you arrive at the top. Climbing an upward trajectory always requires a higher level of exertion than walking on flat ground where little can challenge you. So it is with organizations—whether churches, colleges, or businesses. If an organization desires to move in an upward pattern of growth, there will be greater exertion and testing of the muscles and systems of the organization as a whole. But what is revealed from the top of the hill is most often worth the effort! The fulfillment of the anticipation upon reaching the top is exciting and new stimuli races into the mind of the hiker or organizational leader.

I have often stopped at the top of a big hill to rest, and to revel in the new view. From this view I have a perspective which I never could have imagined or have had described to me from the lower elevations. Here at the top, we snap pictures in celebration of the trail we have climbed, but even more exciting, we see the new vistas awaiting us beyond the challenge we just conquered. In many cases we never even realize there are additional challenges on the other side of the hill as we were not able to see them from below. To climb up (or drive over) a large hill must begin with a plan and vision to move forward and accept the challenge. This decision is followed by the resolve to “stick with it” and make it to the top. This initial vision and resolve is not to be passed over lightly. In a church or other Christian organization, there is often a strong sense of change and vision which the people of God sense is God’s prompting to move and take action for His glory. This may be a



new ministry, or an outreach into new territory (locally or internationally), or it may be a substantial retooling and upgrading of a ministry to position it for greater effectiveness and impact. The progress of the climb takes commitment and an eye on the benefits of the future over present comfort. In God's Word and throughout history, we see many examples of His people consistently sacrificing themselves in obedience to conquer their hills and to expand the His work with His enablement.

At Grace Bible College we are coming to the top of the rise in 2016.

Five years ago in courageous faith, the Board of Directors adopted an aggressive vision for the leadership team of the College to move up a large hill. Prayerfully, and in great faith, the leadership set forth to fulfill that vision. Vision 2016 was set in motion and communicated. It stretched our faith, tested our resolve to focus on the future, aligned our resources, and sought greater involvement of God's people. It was stated as follows:

IN 2016, by God's grace and Divine enablement, Grace Bible College will be an excellent Biblical University of 1000+ diverse students impacting the world according to their God-given callings.

This vision was defined as the fulfillment of our mission statement in the future while holding strongly to our four core values (**Grace Theology, Bible-Centered, Ministry Focused, and Transformational Relationships**) which make us Grace Bible College. In 2011, we had 200 students in a classic traditional educational program on an aging college campus with a 'stretch capacity' of 350. This was the large hill ahead of us, and we began to chart the path to ascend it, needing the cooperation of all parts of our campus; even those who doubted it was a possibility.

In the vision, we described the best that we could how we believed God desired us to progress and grow. We embarked upon a \$1.8 million capital campaign aimed at revitalizing our aging campus. The *Beyond the Bricks* campaign successfully refreshed the major public areas of our campus, including a new student commons, the Jack T. Dean Academic Center, business offices, parking lots, walkways, and landscaping. Aggressive enrollment growth pushed us to fully utilize our facilities as we grew from 200 to about 340 traditional students with a goal of being at 350 in the fall of 2016.

The Adult and Online Educational (AOE) program was launched in 2011 with the approval from our accrediting agencies, the writing of our own curriculum, hiring of staff, and educating faculty regarding this new mode of education for busy adults. The AOE program has over 500 students and is heading toward the goal of 600 by fall of 2016. Our work in the area of graduate studies has begun. Fifteen graduate students enrolled in January of this year, and another full cohort is anticipated in the fall. These students live all around the United States and our instructors teach online from various regions across the US as well.

The level of excellence within our academic and student services has steadily increased with the addition of competent staff members, organizational assessments, and continual improvement measures implemented campus-wide. Additional faculty members have been added who have, or are pursuing, terminal degrees. Staff members address the spiritual, emotional and academic needs of our students and are dedicated to quality human resourcing and growth as well as systems improvement in our pursuit of excellence in everything. Pastor Gary Spykerman served as the first Vern Schutz Chair of Pastoral Ministry, and Paul Sweet currently serves in that role, dedicated to training our new generation of pastors, and preparing and equipping these young men to work in our Grace Churches.

Lord willing, in the fall of this year, we will stand on the rise of this large hill we have known and pursued called Vision 2016. In anticipation, we can say that the view from the top will be exhilarating, yet revelatory. We already, with the rise in elevation, see ways we can minister and impact that we never saw before. Henry Kissinger once stated, "Every success is usually an admission ticket to a new set of decisions." We anticipate God's clear direction and vision as we pause to celebrate His enablement to fulfill Vision 2016. We also pray for clarity as we survey the landscape over the rise and in faith, seek a vision toward 2020 and beyond.

Praise God for how He has enlarged our ministry and impact. In April 2015, we sent forth 129 graduates equipped to impact church and society. 129 is only a few students short of what our total student body count was when I came to the College in 2003. Oh how the Lord has grown us and blessed us! He also has entrusted us with greater responsibility. We seek to be able and faithful stewards of that trust. We thank you, friends and alumni of the College and ask you to pause and celebrate with us the ascent to the top of the rise. We also ask you to prayerfully be a partner in the vista of the journey ahead of us. **Together, in dependence on God, anything is possible.**

NEW PROGRAMS NEW FACES SAME MISSION

KIM PILIECI, PROVOST

Grace Bible College is committed to the Word of God, and to following the leading of the Holy Spirit. We work as unto the Lord, striving to serve with integrity. Although our mission will not change, we must continue to expand our academic programs and pursue excellence.

NEW PROGRAMS

We have received final approval from the Higher Learning Commission to offer the Master of Arts in Ministry. The MA in Ministry has courses that are biblical, practical, and relevant for ministry in the church and culture of the twenty-first century. This 36-credit, online program emphasizes academic rigor, student engagement, and the learning community. Our first cohort began in January 2016.

We are also developing several new courses, concentrations, and programs. Four new concentrations were recently approved: urban ministry, leadership, Old Testament, and New Testament. New programs were approved, including a BS in Psychology and a MBA. With these additional offerings, GBC will have a greater impact in the world for Christ.

NEW FACES

We praise God for the faculty and staff joining us or increasing their role on campus, and we would like to highlight a few of them here.

Peter DeBoer joined the advancement team in July 2015 as a donor relationship specialist. He comes to GBC with over 30 years of fundraising experience and is eager to use his gifts, talents and community connections to further the mission of GBC. Peter graduated from Calvin College, and received his master's degree in public administration from Grand Valley State University.

Peter also spent time as a missionary in Liberia, West Africa planting churches. Pete and his wife Nancy live in the Grand Rapids with their two old dogs, Jack and Schnozie. They have four adult children, all of whom live in the Grand Rapids area.

PETER DEBOER
Donor Relationship Specialist





JEFF BRODRICK
Director of Library Services

I was born and raised in western Michigan and was born again by the Grace of God as a pre-teen.

Christ's completed work on the cross for my sin saved me from God's wrath. While in high school the Lord gave me a number of professional speaking opportunities to share the message of grace with others. After high school, I moved to Pennsylvania to continue my studies in Bible. I then earned a Master's degree in academic computing and began teaching computer science and applications while maintaining my work as Assistant Director of Information Technology at the University. Upon completion of a second Master's in Library and Information Science I was named co-director of the library. As an admitted life-long learner, I continued in a doctoral program studying church history. I am grateful to God for my wonderful wife and our two children.

I joined Grace Bible College in August 2015. God planned our return to Michigan long before I knew about it. We are so amazed at God's attention to even the minute details of our move to Michigan. We can confidently affirm that we belong here at Grace

I have taught English for fifteen years, and have had loved the English language as long as I can remember. I majored in English at the University of Michigan and received a Master's degree in English Studies at Illinois State University. I returned to Michigan, taught English and ran the writing center at Baker College of Flint. This kindled my interest in helping students. As program director of English at Baker College of Muskegon, I taught classes, ran the writing center, and mentored faculty for five years. While there, I pursued a PhD in Educational Leadership. After that, I resigned from my position to take care of my newborn son (the best job I've ever had), but continued to teach English on a part-time basis.

My faith in Christ is very important in my life; however, I have had times when I really lost my way. I returned to Christ by His grace six years ago. Realizing that I could be saved was the most humbling experience of my life. Since committing my life to Christ, I have never looked back. Now as I am seeking to raise my son in this world, it is important to me that he has help to navigate the seas of life. I want him to have a personal faith in God that is strong and so I partner with our local church to help teach him to be a good man with faith in Christ.

I have been teaching at GBC for just over a year. Even though I have taught for fifteen years, nothing has compared to my experience here! GBC students take helping each other to heart. I have

and serving in the Bultema Memorial Library! GBC is a testimony of God's grace and I am happy to be a part of it.

I have begun looking for ways to advance our library. One way to do this is to find friends who will "adopt-a-book" (or database) to enhance and facilitate the academic pursuits of our students and faculty. It is about discerning what is important, knowing what is available, and learning where to find it. This can be done at minimal to no cost!

I am enjoying the discovery of Grace Bible College's rich historical archive and desire to share it with all interested in the College for them to appreciate, too. Nothing is better than knowing that God is the master designer of all we are. My life verse is from Psalm 121:2: "*My help comes from the Lord which made heaven and earth.*" With this kind of help for the believer, we are all bound to great things!

GERALD BROWNING
English Faculty



never seen a group of students so dedicated to helping each other with such sincerity and concern. They root for each other and celebrate victories (be they small or great) of their fellow students. They care about lifting the souls of those around them, and it is inspirational.

Students follow the lead of the faculty and staff. The relationship between students and faculty on campus seems to not be just one of teacher and student, but also one of academic peers and fellow servants of God and His Word. It is not unusual to see students and faculty praying together and consulting one another for advice. Being "the new guy" often creates an awkward feeling for an adjunct, but I was warmly welcomed into the "GBC family!" During my first year, I did not have an office, so I set up at a small computer kiosk near the front door. It was a great way for students to find me on campus, and I had quick access to a computer. Now, I have an office and it is a blessing, but it also makes me sad I miss seeing those students and faculty who would stop by to talk with me. I have never felt that way at any of the other schools where I have taught.

I have a passion for writing and this is evident in how I teach and in my dedication to publishing. Even though my passion to help students has been strong ever since stepping into a classroom, being at Grace rekindled my own faith in Christ as well as my passion to help others. This is due in large part to what I see around me while at GBC.



JACOB RODGERS
Bible and Theology Faculty

I came to the saving knowledge of Christ at the age of four because of the faithful service of Bill Rigg.

During a low point in the marriage of my parents, Bill interceded and brought the good news of Christ's sacrifice and hope of a new life. This choice to follow God impacted the life of my parents and the trajectory of our family tree. As I grow older, I am amazed at how different the path taken by my family looks from that of our cousins. Although I came to the knowledge of Christ at a young age, I did not surrender my life to Christ until I started working at Grace Youth Camp (now known as Grace Adventures). It was under Chad Coppess and the staff of Paradise Ranch that I realized I was called to serve God, not with "lip service," but with service calling for total life investment. I wanted to be involved in a ministry that dramatically altered the trajectory of other families. I saw the amazing power of God at work in the lives of troubled teens and youth that found the hope of Christ despite their hopeless situation.

At that point, I decided to pursue theological education. I graduated from GBC in 2012 with my BS in Biblical Studies, and continued my education at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, graduating in 2015 with my MA in Theology. When I started my journey, I fully intended to go back into camp ministry, but during the course of my education, God placed the joy of teaching and a passion for education on my heart. So many Christian children go to college as followers of Christ but become disillusioned about faith and life. I believe it is not the gospel which has failed them, but rather we (the church) have not properly prepared them to enter the lion's den! We have trained them to be innocent as doves, but the wisdom of the world is like the wiles of the serpent in the garden. The world constantly asks, "Did God really say...?"

In 1984, I graduated from Grace Bible College and began my journey serving Christ. God sent me to Grace Bible Church in Port Orchard, Washington, to serve as Director of Christian Education. I was blessed to serve with Bruce Kemper and Steve Shadley. In 1988, David Holton and I married, and we began ministering together, spending 17 years in youth ministry in Ohio, Florida, and Michigan. In 2007, God led us to the pastorate in Lakeview Bible Church in Carter Lake, Iowa.

While we were in Iowa, I served as a member of the GBC Board. In late 2014, the Lord laid on our hearts a desire to become more involved at the College. Those days were difficult and exciting. While

While I attended Grace, my perspective was that the College was small and struggling to make a significant influence outside of its own community. Since then I have witnessed God developing and building the College into an increasingly diverse and influential work! Diversity in age, race, sex, and perspectives have brought new challenges to the College, but have also paved the way toward broader and more systemic change to our West Michigan community and beyond. By broadening the educational base of our undergraduate program and offering graduate level education, GBC is further opening its doors to those who may not know the good news of Christ. Some students come because they are interested in obtaining a business degree or pursuing a degree in criminal justice with little to no interest in a Biblical or theological education. However, we know that the Word of God does not return void (Isaiah 55:11). It moves and works within the lives of all it touches. We have the grand privilege of being the rock that can divert the root structure of a family tree. My story could have been one of abandonment, disillusion, sibling strife, and hopelessness had it not been for the faithfulness of one follower of Christ. We have the opportunity to impact the lives of our students, as well as the lives of those our students touch.

As a new faculty member I have been welcomed with open arms. Senior faculty members have been willing to guide me along in my professional development, and I have felt embraced as a colleague. My opinions are not only accepted, but requested. I could not have asked for a better growth environment before I go on to pursue my doctoral studies.

we knew the change in ministry was of the Lord, we also knew leaving a congregation we deeply loved and cared for would be difficult. We were glad for the assurance that "it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13).

Our journey serving the Lord has come full circle. It is a privilege to work alongside and learn from Linda Siler. It is a joy to be involved in the lives of the students and to help guide them as they begin their journey serving Christ. GBC holds a very special place in my heart, and I am excited to be a part of the journey for students at GBC.

LINDA HOLTON
Assistant Registrar





TIM RUMLEY

Director of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness / Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies

In March 2015, God led me to Grace Bible College. He is allowing me to use the skills in educational leadership and teaching He has formed into my life to assist GBC in fulfilling its mission and vision.

I have the privilege of assisting the faculty and staff to maximize the ways in which God's reputation for excellence is enhanced through GBC.

God cultivated my educational skills from my earliest experiences of school, as He cultivated my faith. I prayed to trust Christ as a six-year-old, just before entering first grade, and my educational and faith journey have intertwined for over fifty years. In seventh grade, I began attending a Christian school; a change that rescued me in multiple ways. As an adult, I have learned that this is not the case for everyone, but my experience made me a lifelong supporter of all levels of Christian education. I planned to be a pastor, and my first experiences of Christian higher education led to a Bible institute diploma, a BA in Pastoral Studies, and an MA in Bible.

After several years of ministering part-time while earning a living in the marketplace, I pastored a church in Gary, Indiana for eleven years. I spent an additional eleven years in leadership at a Christian

school, and earned a MEd in Educational Leadership. This experience ignited my desire to serve in Christian higher education.

I am currently pursuing a PhD in Educational Studies and plan to finish this year, Lord willing. God has used the last two years to reveal His grace and teach me deeper, more genuine faith in Jesus. One of the outcomes is that God brought me here to Grace Bible College.

Arriving on Grace's campus, I found myself at home! The family atmosphere, the necessity of wearing multiple hats, and the pursuit of excellence all align with both my desires and experience. Grace has a culture of excellence. Assessment is about documenting a process of continuously increasing excellence. The challenge before me is to translate that pursuit into the *lingua franca* of improvement in our day: quantitative analysis.

I am delighted that God answered my prayers and led me to work with people who love Jesus Christ and who are preparing students to serve God in church and society!

My first experience at GBC was as a freshman in 1985. My parents encouraged me to attend GBC because they knew that Grace was a place where I would receive an excellent education, and would not get lost in the crowd or feel like a number. The memories of moving into the dorm in the pouring rain are still vivid. I can picture my father carrying in box after box while my mom chatted with other new students. Little did I know that I would return to Grace Bible College in 2015 as a faculty member!

Grace prepared me to continue my education, and more importantly, it prepared me for a life of adventure with Christ at the center. I received a BA in English from Grand Valley State University, a MA degree in Communication from Western Michigan University, and I am currently a doctoral student at Regent University. In addition to an excellent beginning to my education, GBC is where I met the man of my dreams, Brian Sherstad (the luckiest man in the world!!). We were married in 1989 and were blessed with twin sons, Jordon and Jonah, in 1994. Our association with GBC led our family to a two year term in Tanzania, East Africa as missionaries from 1997 through 1999.

While GBC has grown considerably since 1985 with increased student enrollment, expanded degree programs, and additional facilities, one dynamic has not changed. It is clear that GBC believes the truths and values of the Bible are eternal and essential for all areas of life. This is important to me especially in the field of communication. Communication is a gift from God allowing us to connect with Him and with each other. Every human being is created in God's image with unique communication gifts. It is exciting for me to help students find their "voice" through a Christian worldview.

Following in the footsteps of my parents, my husband and I encouraged our sons to attend GBC. Both are scheduled to graduate this spring.

Without a doubt, GBC holds a special place in my heart. It is a privilege being part of this growing community; a community committed to graduating godly individuals prepared for the incredible adventure of serving Christ.

PAMELA SHERSTAD

Assistant Professor of Communications





RICK PILIECI
Campus Pastor

I grew up with no church background or connection to the Lord. Living in New York, I delivered Entenmann's cake for nine years. I was introduced to the gospel at Eastport Bible Church on Long Island, New York, and on September 7, 1997 at the age of 27, I trusted in Jesus Christ as my personal Savior. Four years later, I answered the call into ministry and moved to Wyoming, Michigan to attend GBC. My wife, Kim and I moved to GBC with our two children Nicholas (age 4) and Jennie Sue (age 1). In 2003, I received my degree from GBC and became youth pastor at Berean Church in Muskegon, Michigan (this position included both youth and family ministries later). During these years, many GBC faculty members, including Dale DeWitt, Mark Carroll, Phil Long, and Jan Schregardus impacted my life. I also grew from my relationship with several Grace pastors, including Rob Renberg, Gary Spykerman, Charley Young, Dwight Reed, and Craig Apel, who encouraged my ministry.

Now as campus pastor, my responsibilities include fostering the overall spiritual emphasis on campus. This comes about through planning chapels, traveling with students, and leading student ministry teams with the purpose of ministering to churches both locally and across the country. I am passionate about being a part of our students' spiritual journey and am humbled to be able to walk alongside of them as they journey – both during times of normality and crisis. I appreciate the joys and challenges of building an effective leadership team with the people God has brought to GBC.

I am excited to pursue my MA in Ministry while at Grace. Although life will be busy, I am at peace knowing that I am right where God wants me.

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 3:17

SAME MISSION

Our mission remains the same: to graduate godly individuals prepared to serve Christ in church and society. The role of academics is an integral part of fulfilling this mission. God has continued to bless Grace Bible College in so many ways! We strive to be obedient to His leading so we might continue to increase our influence in our community, country, and beyond our borders. The cover letter from the President in the 2013 issue of the Journey read, "Our very purpose is not to simply transform or serve, but rather, through an educational process of vigorous study and extra-curricular activities, prepare and train the transformer--the minister." This statement, along with prayer and God's Word, convinced me that I wanted to be a part of this institution. What an honor and blessing to be a part of the process of preparing students to serve Christ! My passion for working with our growing body of students, staff, and faculty -- both returning and new, in our academic programs is unwavering. GBC remains committed to pointing students to the cross and equipping them for careers including missions, vocational ministry, business, human services, criminal justice, education, worship arts, or leadership.

We keep our eyes focused on the most important aspects of our work: loving our Lord, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, and preparing our graduates to serve Him in whatever ways He calls them. In the final paragraph of that same letter, President Kemper wrote, "Change is inevitable...but growth is intentional!" This continues to be true. It is a privilege to serve at GBC as we intentionally seek new faces and new programs toward fulfilling our mission.



A LIVING MEMORIAL

A lasting legacy remains when you honor a loved one or friend with a memorial gift. Your gift to Grace Bible College becomes a living tribute to their memory, and it will powerfully impact the next generation as they are learning how to transform their world for Jesus Christ. We praise God for the lasting legacy provided by these donors during 2015:

BERT BYKER

Dawn Orr

JOSEPH CEREGHINO

Steve and Timora Cereghino

James and Marcie Fosse

Deborah Goodwin

Salt Ministries

Jon Yonko

Frank and Carol Zeller

WAYNE SCHOONOVER

Steve and Betty Hilbrands

MARJORIE SCHUTZ

Betty Barber

Richard Fabbrini

Ruth Leyendecker

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ACADEMIC HONORS

Spring, 2015



PRESIDENT'S LIST

TRADITIONAL PROGRAM

Atemlefac G Asong, *Kumba, Cameroon*
 Lindsey J Burkey, *Grandville, MI*
 Stephen P Burkey, *Grandville, MI*
 Kerri M Classen, *Bronson, MI*
 Nichole J Gray, *Arlington, WA*
 Katelynd N Jamieson, *Wyoming, MI*
 Michelle H Kamps, *Wyoming, MI*
 Hannah E Krause, *Allegan, MI*
 Kali J LaHaie, *Allendale, MI*
 Josie N Lange, *Little Falls, MN*
 Zachary D Niles, *Lake City, MI*
 Alexandra D North, *Byron Center, MI*

Ethan A Partridge,
Cambridge, Ontario, Canada
 Ashley N Poolman, *Jenison, MI*
 Mary G Pryer, *Newaygo, MI*
 Evan A Przybysz, *Wyoming, MI*
 Rachel N Roth, *Jenison, MI*
 Patience J Rumley, *Muskegon, MI*
 Adam M Shultz, *Gobles, MI*
 Miranda N Stout, *Grand Rapids, MI*
 Ashley J Stratmeyer, *Wayland, MI*
 Kyle A Vegh, *Flanders, NJ*
 Dicia A Wahl, *Allegan, MI*
 Cahara A Williams, *Wyoming, MI*
 Kathryn E Yanik, *Port Huron, MI*

NON-TRADITIONAL PROGRAM

Floretia Alexander, *Benton Harbor, MI*
 Leann Alexander, *Grand Rapids, MI*
 Curtis M Anderson, *El Dorado, KS*
 Faith A Arrington, *Cadillac, MI*
 Pedro Avila, *Kent City, MI*
 Anton D Barnes, *Redford, MI*
 John Blazer, *Waynesville, NC*
 Kathleen Bloxsome, *Carmel, IN*
 Cyle Boogaard, *Allendale, MI*
 Amber L Brace, *Warren, MI*
 Kenneth O Bradford, *Plattsmouth, NE*
 LaCharles S Bradley, *Beaumont, TX*
 Corey S Brooks, *Claremont, NC*
 Vickie R Broome, *Flint, MI*
 Sherif H Redtray Brown, *Melbourne, FL*
 Stephen Burrow, *Van Wert, OH*
 Charlene Causey, *Louisville, KY*
 Jason Centala, *Wyoming, MI*
 Alyssa Laura Anne Coeman, *Holland, MI*
 Pamela Colon, *Gonic, NH*
 Zachary Curtis, *Allendale, MI*
 Matthew Dahm, *Grand Rapids, MI*
 Jeremy DeSpain, *Edmonds, WA*
 Kevin Dood, *Grand Rapids, MI*
 Carolyn Evans, *Parker, CO*
 Rachel E Faber, *Jenison, MI*
 Phillip J Floyd, *Nolanville, TX*
 William Fowler, *Logansport, IN*
 Rosalie Gasser, *Payne, OH*
 Kristy Gillfillian, *Mt Victory, OH*
 Joli V Gracon, *Shaker Heights, OH*
 Zane E Hall, *Sidney, NE*
 Chelsea A Harper, *Racine, WI*
 Jennifer K Hodo, *South Sioux City, NE*
 Chelsea M Hooker, *Scottville, MI*
 William A Horton, *Mantua, NJ*
 Charlene P Hubbardadams, *Westland, MI*
 Elizabeth A Hughes, *Berrien Springs, MI*
 Rose Marie Huiuzenga, *Allegan, MI*
 Roger Janesheski, *Niles, MI*
 Janelle L Johnson, *St Clair Shores, MI*
 Lawrence L Johnston, *Little River, SC*
 Deanna H Knee, *Kettering, OH*
 David L Kuikstra, *Kentwood, MI*
 Anthony R Lange, *Saint Johns, MI*
 Timothy G LaVere, *West Branch, MI*
 Melissa Ann Law, *Aliquippa, PA*
 Kohl Long, *Beaufort, SC*
 Eleazar Lopez, *Middleville, MI*
 Damion Lowe, *Kyle, TX*
 Holly R MacDonald, *Mt Clemens, MI*
 Holly R Madden, *Willard, MO*
 Michael J Matthews, *Washington, PA*
 Mary T Mayfield, *Visalia, CA*
 Corey J McCoy, *Kissimmee, FL*
 Charlene K Miller, *Gibsonburg, OH*
 Beth Anne Moore, *Harker Heights, TX*
 Jason Moore, *Harker Heights, TX*
 Melissa A Moran, *Kentwood, MI*
 Marcus C Morgan, *Lansing, MI*
 Alyssia M Ocasio, *Grand Rapids, MI*
 Judah E Pearl, *Oregon, IL*
 Cynthia Pena, *Holland, MI*
 Nadine M Price, *Melbourne, FL*
 Jason L Pugh, *Alto, MI*
 Monae P Pugh, *Moreno Valley, CA*
 Jodi Raby, *Grand Rapids, MI*
 Kateri M Rang, *Rochester Hills, MI*
 Benjamin Reed, *Rochester, NY*
 Brian Rester, *Clinton, MS*
 Nelson L Riley, *Hartsville, SC*
 Elaine R Robinson, *Decatur, GA*
 Dallas Rostad, *Fergus Falls, MN*
 Gina Rowland, *Kemp, TX*
 James D Russell, *Grand Rapids, MI*
 Misty Shafer, *Anderson, MO*
 Kathryn R Shepard, *Oklahoma City, OK*
 Edward L Smith, *Stanwood, WA*
 Helen Smith, *Peoria, IL*
 JoAnna Smyth, *Tallahassee, FL*
 David A Snider, *Wyoming, MI*
 Kelly A Springer, *Michigamme, MI*
 Eric Stahel, *Wyoming, MI*
 Ryan Taylor, *Conklin, MI*
 Ludwing G Torres, *Chino Hills, CA*
 Patricia Turner, *Grand Rapids, MI*
 James J Wentz, *Grand Rapids, MI*
 Lydia M White, *Flag Pond, TN*
 Jonathan A Whitt, *Avon Lake, OH*
 Arnetirious C Wilkins, *Grand Rapids, MI*
 Bill G Winchester, *Valley Falls, KS*

DEAN'S LIST

TRADITIONAL PROGRAM

Taylor S, Achterhoff, *Jenison, MI*
 Amanda R Alfaro, *Holland, MI*
 Jennilyn R Ake, *Fort Gratiot, MI*
 Samantha J Argutto, *Moriches, NY*
 Blake R Bachelor, *Allendale, MI*
 Alexandria L Bailey, *Olympia, WA*
 Briana V Bailey, *Olympia, WA*
 Caryn A Baker, *Byron Center, MI*
 Deanna N Bazan, *Holland, MI*
 Autumn G Befus,
San Antonio de Belen, Costa Rica
 Camron C Befus,
San Antonio de Belen, Costa Rica
 Leah M Benton, *Sumbawanga, Tanzania*
 Zachary M Benton,
Sumbawanga, Tanzania
 Jacob L Betts, *Houghton, MI*
 Jacob D Blauwkamp, *Grandville, MI*
 Jonathan S Blosser, *Trenton, MI*
 Jared S Bradford, *Sparta, MI*
 Sydney R Brown, *Mukwonago, WI*
 John P Caprari, *Eastport, NY*
 Morgan D Carlisle, *Traverse City, MI*
 Lucia Chaves Pacheco,

Alajuela, Costa Rica
 Daniel E Cole, *Wyoming, MI*
 Cameron C Cramer, *Ida, MI*
 Emily D Cross, *Muskegon, MI*
 Sean D A Day, *Wyoming, MI*
 Dean A Deloof, *Grand Haven, MI*
 Travis J DeWall, *Hudsonville, MI*
 Anais K Doornbos, *East Grand Rapids, MI*
 John P Ermatinger, *Wyoming, MI*
 Jonathan A Ether, *Niles, MI*
 Joseph B Furno, *Canton, OH*
 Holly V Haney, *Everett, WA*
 Carolyn J Hill, *Zeeland, MI*
 Kimberlee J Holstad, *Jenison, MI*
 Mark G Hucklebury, *Coral, MI*
 Shannon C Hupp, *Highland, MI*
 Brandon W Jacklin, *Cedar, MI*
 Karlion L Jackson, *Inkster, MI*
 Brenna L Johnston, *Grayling, MI*
 Alexander K Karris, *Newaygo, MI*
 Brianna L Kavanagh, *Hastings, MI*
 Michael R Kosten, *Grand Rapids, MI*
 Anna D Lange, *Mobile, AL*
 Erica J Lathrop, *Traverse City, MI*
 Amy L Leszinske, *Ravenna, MI*
 Angel D Lundy, *Grandville, MI*
 Steven M Lundy, *Grandville, MI*
 Jillian K Luplow, *Clare, MI*
 Connor S MacDonald, *Spokane Valley, WA*
 Sean N Martin, *Wittenberg, WI*
 Kevin D McKissick, *Grand Rapids, MI*
 Whitney L Miller, *Wyoming, MI*
 Bailey M Mines, *Muskegon, MI*
 Rebecca S Moore, *Jenison, MI*
 Lauren A Olsen, *Pierson, MI*
 Austin A Olson, *Coral, MI*

Samuel H Overman, *Rocky Mount, NC*
 Natalie M Parker, *Wyoming, MI*
 Dustin J Paulsen, *Saxtonburg, PA*
 Jessica L Pegg, *Allegan, MI*
 Deborah A Pekel, *Muskegon, MI*
 Sarah A Petersen, *South Lyon, MI*
 Lauren E Peterson, *Comstock Park, MI*
 Travis A Rader, *Dorr, MI*
 Trent N Ramos, *Holland, MI*
 Ellie N Ratter, *Marne, MI*
 Tasha R Reed, *Santa Cruz, Bolivia*
 Holly B Renberg, *Canton, OH*
 Jaclynn R Rumennapp, *Richmond, MI*
 David G Schrock, *Kalamazoo, MI*
 Lisse B Schuerman, *Coshocton, OH*
 Abigail E Schultz, *Holland, MI*
 Jonah P Sherstad, *Hudsonville, MI*
 Jordon T Sherstad, *Hudsonville, MI*
 Samantha J Smith, *Hamilton, MI*
 Stafford A Smith, *Petoskey, MI*
 Benjamin C Stout, Jr, *Lakeview, MI*
 David P Stout, *Grand Rapids, MI*
 Nathanael W Striebel, *Chicago Ridge, IL*
 Alicia M Swieringa, *Jenison, MI*
 Skylar L Thomas, *Wyoming, MI*
 Allyssa L Thompson, *Hudsonville, MI*
 Anthony S Thompson, *Zeeland, MI*
 Zachary P Thompson, *Allegan, MI*
 Mandy L Todhunter, *Post Falls, ID*
 Jessica S Turnbough, *Latah, WA*
 Christopher M VanderWeide, *Zeeland, MI*
 Moses E VanKoeveering, *Hudsonville, MI*
 Alyssa A VanStrien, *Jenison, MI*
 Eric J Veeneman, *Byron Center, MI*
 Anna L Veldink, *Hudsonville, MI*
 Tyler J Vining, *Battle Creek, MI*

Aaron J Wiens, *Brookfield, WI*
 Hannah R Wight, *Rockford, MI*
 Erin E Wilke, *Gladwin, MI*
 Lucas C Williams, *Traverse City, MI*

NON-TRADITIONAL PROGRAM

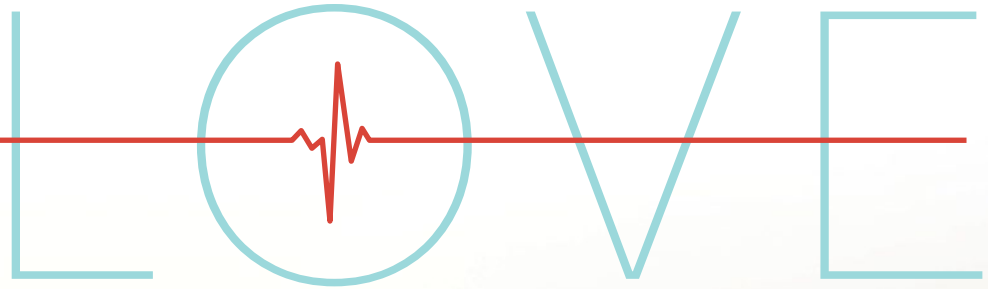
Billie Jo Abbott, *Grand Rapids, MI*
 Yvonne Adams, *Harrisburg, PA*
 Harold G Allaway, *Wyoming, MI*
 Victoria H Alper, *Ocala, FL*
 Ariana A Amerman, *Vancouver, WA*
 Gregory D Anderson, *Bloomington, IN*
 Jonathan M Baumstark, *Haymarket, VA*
 Khayree M Beckem, *Muskegon, MI*
 Jesus E Benavides, *Killeen, TX*
 Zachary D Bengston, *Hudsonville, MI*
 Larry A Brabson, *Canton, OH*
 John Brack, *Key Largo, FL*
 Darrell Brandt, *Pago Pago, HI*
 Travis L Burns, *Welcome, NC*
 Andrews N Colon, *Lockport, IL*
 George Cripps, *Santa Ana CA*
 Stephanie N Davis, *Bristol, VA*
 Adrian A Diaz, *Victorville, CA*
 Nathan M Dilliner, *Sesser, IL*
 James Everett, *Denver, CO*
 Hannah Falk, *Grass Lake, MI*
 Lisette Garcia, *Wyoming, MI*
 Avis Grant, *St Louis, MO*
 Melissa A Hines, *Muskegon, MI*
 Michael Holcomb, *Alvada, OH*
 Timothy D Hylton, *Beckley, WV*
 Marc L Ines, *Hesperia, CA*
 Jackie L Ingram, *Eastman, GA*
 Marva Jones, *Kentwood, MI*
 Regina M Jones, *Chataula, GA*

Joshua J Kinder, *Jay, FL*
 Abigail Lopez, *Allendale, MI*
 Alice M Lynch, *Irvine, KY*
 Elenora Lyons, *Grand Rapids, MI*
 Robert Mariucci, *Mint Hill, NC*
 Heather Marshall, *Titusville, FL*
 Aneysa H Matthews, *Corinth, MS*
 Yelitza Morales, *Wyoming, MI*
 Taijanae Nelson, *Melbourne, FL*
 LaShunda M Nickles, *Houston, TX*
 Stephen A Nilson, *Williamsport, PA*
 Christopher M Parrish, *Bend, OR*
 Camie D Parrott, *Ardmore, OK*
 Joanna Phelps, *San Tan Valley, AZ*
 Nichols M Phelps, *San Tan Valley, AZ*
 Kenneth Reed, *Sterling Heights, MI*
 Brittany M Rester, *Clinton, MS*
 Margaret M Revels, *Columbus, GA*
 Tiffany Richardson, *Grand Rapids, MI*
 Brandi Riffel, *Brownsburg, IN*
 Ricardo Rosas, *Oxford, OH*
 Christopher F Ross, *Tucson, AZ*
 Kindra L Santander, *Longmont, CO*
 Austin Schild, *Hamilton, MI*
 Cedric D Schofield, *Hephzibah, GA*
 Edwin Serrano, *Woodhaven, NY*
 Shawn D Spohn, *Gainesboro, TN*
 Steven L Spohn, *Prescott, MI*
 Allison E Swanson, *Phoenix, AZ*
 Joseph W Tant, *Dallas, GA*
 Rebecca J Taylor, *Sequim, WA*
 Africa N Tette, *Wyoming, MI*
 James A Vandermeer, *Coopersville, MI*
 Joanne VanHolstyn, *Grand Rapids, MI*
 Vanessa M Wohl, *Hollister, MO*
 Rebecca A Zuber, *Jenison, MI*



NO GREATER

LOVE



“GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS,
THAT A MAN LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS.”

John 15:13



It is often said around GBC and by GBC students and alumni that one of the biggest blessings of Grace Bible College is our community. **We are a family who cares about and for each other.** Friendships become lifetime relationships among many of us, and every so often, a story surfaces which illustrates the depth of this love and commitment we share. Christy Boeck Robinson (1990) shares this story of how God connected three GBC families for over forty years, and how during those years, He showed His patience, His love, and His grace.

So often in our lives we plan, meet, organize, and prepare so much that we miss seeing God's hand in action. God has the ultimate plan and His plan is carried out with ultimate patience.

In the late 1960's the Lord led my parents, Jim and Maggie Boeck (both GBC alumni), to minister at the Preakness Bible Church in Wayne, New Jersey. While living there, we (my parents, my brother Noah, and I) became friends with Bill and Carol Wilderson and their children, Wendy, Charma, Billy, and Duane. We grew close to each other during those years. In 1978, my family moved on to a new ministry in Holland, Michigan. We remained friends with the Wildersons, but lost touch with each other for a time.

In 1988, I enrolled at Grace Bible College, and met an incoming student from Clearbrook, Virginia, named John Robinson. We dated, became engaged, and were married in 1990. During that same time period, Billy Wilderson enrolled at GBC. He had already graduated from college elsewhere with a degree in engineering, but had always felt led to go into the ministry. His desire to minister had been fostered by my father during their time together. While at GBC, Billy reconnected with my family, and met my husband, John. Billy, John and I became close friends, and we led a youth group together at Berean Bible Church in Holland, Michigan.

Billy graduated from GBC with a BTh in 1994, and returned to his family farm in New Milford, Pennsylvania. Although Billy never

entered into "full-time professional ministry," he always found ways to minister and share his faith. Over the years, he ministered in a variety of ways, including leading youth group canoe and camping trips, doing maintenance work for youth camps, leading Bible studies, and speaking at Sunday services for local farm and tractor shows.

During this period, our family grew. We adopted our son, Matthew, in 1997. In 1999, Marie, Anthony, and Elizabeth were adopted. In 2000, Samson was adopted. Jessica was adopted in 2002, followed by the adoption of James in 2006. In 2008, son Isaiah was born into the family.

In 2014, our son, Matthew had just completed his junior year of high school. He applied for, and was accepted to a summer leadership experience at West Point Military Academy in West Point, New York. We drove him to New York, and during the week while he was working, I was able to show John around Wayne, New Jersey. We were also able to attend a Sunday service at Preakness Bible Church and connect with old friends. On a whim, we decided to take a couple of days to drive to New Milford, Pennsylvania to see Billy. Friends from the church had mentioned that Billy was battling some illness, and we wanted to check in with him.

During that visit, we learned that Billy's illness created secondary issues which led to renal failure, and Billy was now on dialysis, and awaiting a kidney transplant. Billy talked openly about being on the



transplant list, and shared that there were ups and downs, but his faith in God's love did not waiver. He told us, "I'm in God's hands." John and I spent the night with Billy, and returned the next day to West Point to pick up Matthew. On the drive back to West Point, we talked about Billy's situation, and his strong faith in God. During the conversation, John asked me what was involved in becoming a kidney donor. Having a medical background, I knew there would be blood type and tissue match testing. He asked me how I would feel if he went through the process to become a donor. I told him if he felt like it was something he wanted to do, I would fully support him.

When we returned to Michigan, John and I contacted the Lehigh Valley Hospital transplant office (Billy's hospital) to inquire about being a donor. The hospital sent a packet of documentation and tests that needed to be completed. The very first test was the blood test to make sure the two would be a match. During the blood draw, John asked the nurse what the chances were that they would be a match. The nurse responded that it was not likely, but it wasn't impossible either. **The blood tests were a match. God was showing His hand!**

The next step would be to complete chest X-rays, CAT scans, more in-depth blood tests, and urine tests. Our son, Matthew was scheduled for some outpatient knee surgery. John and I took him to the hospital for his procedure. While he was in surgery, we went to the patient registration window and said, "We don't have an appointment here, but are looking to be kidney donors, and need this list of tests. Our son is in surgery right now, and we were wondering if you could do these tests while he is under." The registration nurse looked at the list, and responded that they could do all of them but one, and could do them immediately. Once again, God was showing His hand!

The last test to be administered before a final OK would be given was a 48 hour kidney function test. The results came back unfavorable. The nephrologist (kidney specialist) assigned to John said he would not allow John to be a donor because the output

contained oxallates at a 450 level. High oxallate levels indicate future kidney stones, and could be very dangerous. We all were very disappointed by this news. But Billy again reminded us that the process was all in God's hands. God had a purpose. Throughout the process, the Wilderson family prayed the most heartfelt and humbling prayers! Their faith and love for the Father was so real and so comforting.

A few days after the news, John contacted the nephrologist to ask what could be done to lower his oxallate levels. The doctor told him, "I will not recommend you as a donor. Your levels are so high, that with any diet I give you, you won't be able to get the numbers into an acceptable range. Your oxallate levels need to be under 250." After much discussion, the doctor relented, and sent John a diet to follow for six months. The oxallate levels would then be re-tested.

The diet consisted of many basics – like increased water intake and lower sodium intake – along with many other things. The diet was followed, the six months passed, and the test was re-administered. This time, John's results came back with an oxallate level of 200! The kidney transplant coordinator called us, and informed us that she just left the transplant team meeting (which included John's nephrologist). The team was in agreement that John could donate! She also commented on several occasions that the change in oxallate levels was nothing short of amazing. Of course, what the transplant team was unaware of was the number of people praying! People were not praying that the levels would change, or even that the surgery would be a success. People – with Billy leading the charge – were praying that God would be the focus of this process. In light of God's power and love, low oxallate levels really aren't that impressive!

With all the testing finally behind us, a surgery date was set. The first available date that worked for everyone was September 30, 2015, which was four months away. Time slowly passed, and arrangements were made. My mother, Maggie (Grandma) Boeck would stay with our children in Michigan, assisted by our family friends Nate and Linsay Mitchell, while we were gone. John's parents, Curtis and Hattie, as well as his sisters Nannette and Jacque, would travel to Pennsylvania to be with me, Bill, and Carol during the surgery. The September 25 pre-surgery appointment arrived. Billy and John had simultaneous doctor appointments throughout the process, even though they were under the care of separate doctors. We spent most of that next week with the Wildersons. During this time, Billy's parents, Bill and Carol, prayed with the families constantly. When there was good news, the Wildersons prayed and were thankful. When there was bad news, the Wildersons prayed and were thankful. Their faith was an incredible blessing.



At 6:00 am on September 30, Billy, John, and family members arrived at Lehigh Valley Hospital to begin the transplant process. John was taken to pre-op. A short time later, Billy joined him in pre-op. They were in connecting pre-op rooms, and were able to communicate with each other right up until the beginning of the surgery. Billy had commented several times over the past months that one side effect of his kidney failure was difficulty in completing his thoughts. He said his mind felt cloudy, and he would frequently find himself searching for words.

Shortly after noon on September 30, John's surgery was complete, and he was in recovery. The surgeries were staggered by a couple of hours, and later that afternoon, Billy's surgery was finished, and he was also sent to recovery. As Billy came out of the anesthesia, he commented that his mind already felt clearer. He felt like he could think clearly again! At this point, nobody was sure whether Billy's body would reject the kidney or not – but at this point, it felt like the surgery was a success.

Soon, John was moved from post-op to a medical surgery floor to continue recovery. Billy was moved there the next day, and was placed in the room next door to John's room. We asked the nurses how often that happens when a donor and recipient end up in rooms next to each other. They said it seldom, if ever, happened. Many even said they had never had it occur while they had worked there. For the next week, Billy and John had the same nurses, and they were able to walk together as part of their rehabilitation. Our families were able to

visit both rooms and spend time together, praying together and ministering to each other. Visitors were also able to visit both men easily. The feeling was that God had taken care of every detail!

Just as John and Billy were admitted together on September 30, they were discharged together on October 5. Prior to the surgery, they would talk, and John would encourage Billy. The “daily grind” could be difficult, and at times Billy would become discouraged or frustrated. After surgery, the tables were turned. John was struggling after the surgery, and Billy became his encourager! He encouraged John to get up, walk, and follow the rehabilitation process.

Now that months have passed, Billy and John look back on the process with amazement. They are amazed at the number of people who sacrificed to make this a reality. Our church families prayed continuously; co-workers picked up the extra work load; Grandma Boeck gave of her time and resources; our children picked up the work load at home; our parents and families traveled, prayed, and chauffeured; friends provided meals; I worked to care for John, and keep our family and friends updated; and cards upon cards arrived from many people – with encouraging words of comfort.

At the end of all this, Billy and John hope that this is not just a story about a “medical procedure,” but a story that leads people back to the cross of Calvary – reminding us of the greatest sacrifice that was ever made. They desire that this become a story of God's people answering the call to care for each other in Christian love.





Graduation

GRADUATION IS A SPECIAL HIGHLIGHT EACH YEAR AT GBC. Activities to celebrate our 2015 graduates began with a banquet on Friday evening, April 24. Friends, family, and graduates gathered at Stonewater Country Club for a wonderful night of music, testimony, and celebration. Testimonies of God's faithfulness and direction were shared by Kristen Doornbos, Cameron Cramer, Melissa Moran, and Vanessa Wohl. Hearing their words caused hearts to overflow with gratitude and thankfulness to God for all He has done, and all voices were raised together in praise as we concluded the evening singing "Great Is Thy faithfulness, Lord unto me!"

Rush Creek Bible Church was the venue for the following morning's commencement ceremony, and the building was filled to capacity! In addition to 129 students receiving their diplomas, recognition was given to those graduating with Honor and High Honor. Each year, special awards are given in honor of outstanding men of God who were connected with Grace Bible College. The *C.F. Baker Biblical Studies Award* was given to Kyle Vegh. The *H.B. Prince Homiletics Award* was presented to Adam Renberg. The *T.R. Huston Christian Service Award* was awarded to Kevin McKissick. Jessica Turnbough and Ryan Vegh were both presented with the *Vernon H. Stromberg Worship Arts Award*. It was special to have Bill and Nancy Rigg with us as a new award was given for the first time. The *William L. Rigg Youth Ministry Award*, named in honor of Bill for his lifelong impact on youth and youth ministry was given to Joseph Furno.

We were blessed and encouraged to hear the words of graduates Craig Washington and John Caprari as they shared the commencement address with us. We have included some highlights from their speeches for your encouragement.

Craig Washington



Graduates, we have learned to trust God. All of us worked very hard, studied long hours, and trusted God to give energy and stamina to finish. That hard work brought us to this point: it is the conditioning for the work yet to come. It is evident that we trust God, because we are here! God gave us the tenacity to persevere through the many obstacles and challenges we faced, because of our trust in Him. It will be very difficult to accomplish goals and reach our potential, if we do not trust God. *Trust Him always and in all things! Trust God* and pray. Ask Him to give you strength to handle difficult times. *Trusting in Him* gives assurance that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us!

It is time for us to go out into the world with the spiritual gifts, tools, and the knowledge of Christ -- the Word of God! Be ready to meet the broken, hurting, and suffering souls. Be compassionate, and encourage everyone, demonstrating your *trust in the Lord!* I have learned to trust God by listening to His voice more and less to my own. I think back to a time when I was in business—and it was all about that business. I trusted things and relied on other people. My focus was in the wrong place and I made mistakes in my decisions. God deserves so much more than just a few moments of our time. We must totally *trust God* at all times, moving beyond our pride and fleshly desires. *Trust is essential.*

Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us: *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.* We did not come to GBC by accident! This was part of God's plan for our lives. He brought us together, to learn, to encourage one another, to work alongside each other, and to build relationships! God has been transforming us from the day we began at GBC, and that transformation is awesome! When we totally surrender to Christ, the Lord transforms us by changing our lives. *Trusting God* is needed for transformation. And, God continues to “chip away” at us to bring more and more change to our lives. Graduation does not end our transformation, we will continue to be transformed by our obedience, dependence, and total trust in our Lord Jesus Christ!

To be prepared to serve, we must stand on the foundation of God's Word, and know His Word is to be handled as II Timothy 2:15 states: *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed...but, it does not stop there, it must be by ...rightly dividing the Word of Truth.* If this is not done, we will fail, there is no validity to our message, and that will weaken our mission! How can we be sure we are truly leading others to Christ if we do not rightly divide the Word of Truth?

In teaching others and preaching the dispensation of the grace of God, we must rightly divide the Word of Truth. Whatever position we pursue as Christians we must not deviate from God's principles nor from the dispensation of the grace of God, given to the Apostle Paul. When we are negligent in this area, we are not being true servants of the Lord! Let us preach the Word (II Timothy 4:2).

When you are given an opportunity to disciple, mentor, teach, or preach, treat it as if it is your last opportunity! Preach the cross of Christ by rightly dividing the Word of Truth. In I Corinthians 2:1-5 Paul said: *And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*

Remember our faith and trust is to be in God, not in ourselves or anyone else -- just Him! We all may look different outside, but on the inside, if the love of Christ is in us, we are the same. God knows our hearts. The world wants us to separate ourselves from one another because of ethnic, financial, or educational differences. Apply what you learned at GBC about trusting God and His Word, so you are true servants of Christ, demonstrating His love! God knows His servants. II Timothy 2:19 says: *Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His. And, let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*

I believe our College is the greatest college in the world. Its nucleus is formed by its leadership, culture, and mission – which is driven by the Spirit of Christ--the force that makes change come about in the lives of individuals!

Lord without you we are nothing, without your guidance we are lost, without your strength we cannot make it, and without your Word we would die!

So let us live, keeping a daily appointment with the Lord. Read, pray, and meditate on His Word each day! Now and forever more, continue to stand fast in the faith! In the name of Jesus, AMEN! AMEN! AMEN!

CONTINUED ►



John Caprari

I want to affirm what Brother Craig said. No matter how much we feel we have accomplished or how successful we feel we have been, we must continue to depend on and trust in God. I loved his emphasis on the Word of God. What a great challenge to keep His Word central in our lives, as it is foundational to any career God calls us to. I would like to reflect a bit more on what it means to be prepared to serve Christ.

What does it mean to be prepared? We have all heard things like, “Oh, you don’t have a writing utensil for class... you’re not prepared...” Naomi and I leave for Africa soon and people keep asking, “Are you prepared? Are you ready to go?” And this week, I had people ask, “Are you prepared for your speech?”

As I reflect on my time at GBC, there are three areas where I feel we have been prepared.

- *We have been prepared intellectually.* This one may be obvious, but it shouldn’t be taken for granted. GBC has top-notch professors who have prepared us well, and not only in the realm of theory and academics. We have learned to ask the right questions and to think “out of the box.” We have learned to study the Word of God at a high level. We have learned to think and see the world through a certain lens.
- *We have been prepared relationally.* We have learned how to live in community, how to grow our relationships, and grow close bonds with one another. We have learned that loving people is one of the most important things we can do, especially when it comes to being leaders wherever God places us.
- *We have definitely been prepared spiritually.* GBC is absolutely graduating godly individuals today! We have learned to place Christ at the center of every aspect of our lives. We have been given the tools to continually grow in our ongoing, never-ending relationship with Christ.

Being prepared suggests that there is something to be prepared for! GBC is graduating godly individuals prepared to *serve Christ*. Our being prepared does not carry as much significance if it is not done in the context of serving Christ. We have been prepared in a way to take what we have learned into our future ministries -- whether we are a pastor, businessman, social worker, or school teacher. There will be certain circumstances for which we will not feel prepared. Part of being prepared means learning

to rely and depend on the Holy Spirit. As we serve Christ, we have to let the Holy Spirit take care of business.

We must remember *the Spirit of God makes us competent to serve Christ!* II Corinthians 3:4-6 says: “*Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit.*” No matter how special or gifted or prepared you feel you are, it is God who makes you competent for ministry.

And, it is important to acknowledge that *God makes our serving Christ successful!* I Corinthians 3:5-7 says: “*What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe – as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.* It doesn’t matter how well we have been prepared -- when we are serving Christ, God is the one who makes us successful!

Even when we feel we are prepared more than we need to be, difficulties will happen. There will be times -- even seasons in life -- where obstacles seem to be never ceasing, and we will feel we are in “over our heads.” But take heart! God is the one who makes us competent in our service, and God is the one who makes us successful in our service to Him.

So graduates, our diplomas are not the end all. Our preparation at GBC was NOT the finish line. I encourage you to take time to reflect on what you’ve learned. But, please don’t stop moving forward or pushing toward the goal. You’re ready... but this is not the end. Keep moving forward.

Grace Bible College, please keep doing what you’re doing: graduating godly individuals prepared to serve Christ in church and society.

And, I encourage every one here to figure out what your passion is, get prepared, and let the Holy Spirit guide, direct, and empower you as you serve Him! Be willing to change your plans for God, and always be available and willing to follow His call on your life.

What does the Bible Say About Planning for the Future?



C.S. Lewis once said, "Aim at heaven and you will get earth thrown in. Aim at earth and you get neither." When it comes to our finances, the Bible has much to say to help us "aim at heaven:"

SEEK AND HEED WISE FINANCIAL COUNSEL

Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed (Proverbs 15:22). Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise (Proverbs 19:20).

TRUST IN GOD BRINGS PEACE

A righteous man will be remembered forever. He will have no fear of bad news; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord. His heart is secure, he will have no fear; in the end he will look in triumph on his foes. He has scattered abroad His gifts to the poor, His righteousness endures forever; His horn will be lifted high in honor (Psalm 112:6-9).

FACE TRIALS WITH AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE

When the foundations are being destroyed, what can the righteous do? The Lord is in His holy temple; the Lord is

on His heavenly throne. He observes the sons of men; His eyes examine them. The Lord examines the righteous, but the wicked and those who love violence His soul hates. On the wicked He will rain fiery coals and burning sulfur; a scorching wind will be their lot. For the Lord is righteous, He loves Justice; upright men will see His face (Psalm 11:3-7).

PRACTICE GENEROSITY AND INTERDEPENDENCE IN THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. Then there will be equality, as it is written: 'he who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little did not have too little' (II Corinthians 8:13-15).

LOOK FORWARD TO THE RETURN OF CHRIST

According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever (I Thessalonians 4:15-17). All that is here on earth which is not eternal will be left behind and of no value. Invest in the eternal – lives changed by effective ministers and ministries!

This is general information and is not intended to be tax or legal advice. Please consult your own advisors.

www.gbcol.edu/giving

Since establishing the Grace Bible College Legacy Society we have seen many individuals and couples share their plans with us. We invite you to become a member of the Legacy Society too! As a member of the Legacy Society you indicate to us that you have made arrangements to remember Grace Bible College in your will or in some other form of planned gift.

We would be pleased to have you share this information with us now as it allows us the

opportunity to thank you while you are still living, and it helps us as we strive to plan for future capital expansion to know there is a revenue stream that will come to Grace in the years ahead.

When you notify us of this extraordinary decision you will receive a special letter of thanks from President Kemper as well as a lovely recognition gift from us.

We welcome the opportunity to talk with you and discuss effective stewardship

which will allow you to maximize your giving so that we may continue to educate and prepare young people to impact the world for Christ.

For further information, please contact Steve Hilbrands at 616-261-8565 or shilbrands@gbcol.edu.





You?



Walk into any bookstore and look at the size of the self-help section. You will quickly recognize that we live in a world in which people are desperate to understand themselves. As a culture, we long to move from where we are to where we want to be, discovering our true identity, mission, and purpose. In actuality, this outward search for self-knowledge displays an underlying, greater need: we are a people desperate for the knowledge of God.

In contrast to our culture's seemingly incessant search for self-reliance, self-understanding, and self-help, the great Reformer John Calvin notes at the outset of his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, that right knowledge of the self can only be found by pursuing the knowledge of God. He says, "it is evident that man never attains to a true self-knowledge until he has previously contemplated the face of God, and come down after such contemplation to look into himself" (*Institutes* 1.2). In Calvin's view, the rebellion and sin of the human race against the Creator makes it impossible for us to truly understand ourselves. Such knowledge cannot start with us; it can only begin, Calvin says, with a contemplation of the face of God. The idea of contemplating the face of God originates with Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. However, before we get there, we need to see that Paul's frame of reference goes all the way back to the earliest days of nation of Israel.

More than 3,000 years ago, God revealed Himself to a shepherd named Moses, famously calling to Moses out of the burning bush. When Moses asked this God who He was, God replied: "I am the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." God further goes on to reveal that He is a God who is on the side of His people, that He has heard their cries for deliverance out of slavery in Egypt, and has come down to fulfill the promises made to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. When Moses asks God's name, the Lord replies, "I AM THAT I AM." Here, the Lord reveals His covenant name, which our Bibles typically translate LORD. After a mighty deliverance of the nation of Israel from Egypt, culminating in the plague of the firstborn, the first Passover, and parting of the Red Sea, the Lord brings His people to the foot of Mt. Sinai in the wilderness. It is in this place that the Lord reveals Himself to Israel; significantly, Sinai is the very place where the Lord initially revealed Himself to Moses.

After the giving of the Ten Commandments and the rest of the Book of the Covenant (Exodus 19-24), Chapters 33 and 34 of Exodus go on to describe Moses' unique relationship with the Lord. We read, "The LORD would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend" (Exodus 33:11). In another well-known instance, Moses says to the Lord, "Show me Your glory." To which the Lord replies, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the LORD before you" (33:18). However, the Lord also says, "You cannot see My face, for no one can see My face and live" (33:19). Famously, the Lord hides Moses in the cleft of the rock, while His glory passes by, and what Moses sees is more like the trail of God's glory, a shadow, or an impression of the Presence of the Lord. What can we take away from this mysterious, awe-inspiring relationship between God and Moses that might reveal something about our knowledge of God (and therefore our knowledge of self)?

In the Hebrew language, the word for glory is *kabod*, which means "splendor" and has the sense of brightness that causes one to bow down or hide one's eyes because of the weight or majesty of what has been witnessed. Interestingly, Exodus 34 says that after his meetings with God, Moses' face would shine with God's glory (Exodus 34:29ff.). There was something about the radiance of God's nature that continued to shine through Moses, who had to put a veil over his face so that he could speak to the people (Exodus 34:33-35). The glory of the Lord shone so brightly through Moses that it was too much for the people around him; it overwhelmed and terrified them!

We now have an adequate background for understanding what Paul wants to say to some of the earliest Christians. The apostle Paul is writing to the community of Corinth, to a group of people who have put their trust in the crucified and risen Savior, Jesus the Messiah. In order to describe the glory of his new covenant ministry as an apostle of Jesus Christ, Paul uses the story of Moses to teach some incredible truths to these believers related to their identity in Christ. In fact, Paul frames his entire ministry around the idea of contemplating the face of God as it is reflected in Jesus Christ. He says:

And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into His image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.
(II Corinthians 3:18)

CONTINUED ►



The word “*contemplate*” in this verse deserves some special attention. You may note that some Bibles translated this phrase as “reflect the Lord’s glory.” Perhaps you even memorized this verse with the word “reflect” instead of “contemplate.” The good news is, both translations are accurate: the original Greek word is *katoptrizō*, which literally means “to cast a reflection” or “look at oneself in a mirror” (*BAG*, 4th Edition, 424). When you get right down to it, it’s not that big of a jump, from merely looking at oneself in the mirror to *contemplating* what you see. Perhaps the best (and least embarrassing!) example of such contemplation is that of a bride on her wedding day: as she gazes into the mirror, she indeed sees her reflection, but her contemplation of that reflection reveals so much more. Her whole life has led up to this moment: all the dreams, all the hopes, all her plans. Her state of reflection - both physical and contemplative - is much deeper than a superficial reflection of her physical appearance.

So it is with the believer. The Apostle says that we “contemplate” (or reflect) the Lord’s glory, and through that contemplation (reflection) we are transformed into His image, with “ever increasing glory” (II Corinthians 3:18). Thus when Christians “look in the mirror” (i.e., think about our identity) we do not see our own image reflected, but rather the image of Jesus Christ, who is himself the image of God (II Corinthians. 4:4). The contemplation of this good news, both in the person and work of Jesus Christ on our behalf, results in the transformation of the believer as we come to reflect the glory of God more and more in our everyday work, family life, and the pursuit of our God-given talents and vocations. This transformation itself comes from the Lord Jesus Christ, and is the ongoing work of the Spirit to produce Christ likeness in us (Galatians 5:22ff.).

Therefore unlike Moses, who had to put a veil over his face to cover the glory of God, believers in this dispensation of God’s grace ought to shine the glory of God freely, extravagantly, magnificently. Paul

says it like this, “*For God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God’s glory displayed in the face of Christ*” (II Corinthians 4:6). The same God who said, “Let there be light!” and created all things by His powerful Word, causes the light of redemption to shine through the lives of believers today. It also bears mentioning that just a few verses later, Paul goes on to describe the reflection of this glory as an imitation of Jesus Christ in His *suffering*, describing Christian life as weak, imperfect, and frail. Like “treasure in jars of clay,” this reality constantly reminds us that the power and glory reflected in Christian life comes from God and not from ourselves.

Truly, this is where we find our identity. Not in the knowledge of self, but in the “knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.”

At Grace Bible College, our theme for the year is “Know Your Identity.” And as a believer discovers his or her true identity, mission, and purpose in Jesus Christ, contemplating Him and reflecting Him to the world, they begin to put the glory of God on display for all to see. This means finding God’s strength in weaknesses, frailty, and failings (II Corinthians 12:9-10). It means finding God’s purpose in the seemingly random (good or bad) events of life, and in the mundane of everyday work, child rearing, and home life. It means finding our identity and meaning in Jesus Christ, not just in joyful times and the ‘highs’ of life, but even in the midst of suffering, tragedy, and incomprehensible loss. This kind of rightly-ordered self-knowledge has the potential to make every aspect of life in Christ overflow “to the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One He loves” (Ephesians 1:6). May you come to know that your identity - your true identity - is in the crucified and risen Lord of the world, Jesus Christ, and that your mission, purpose, and all meaning in life ultimately comes from Him.

Matthew H. Loverin is Associate Dean of Graduate Studies.

Alumni News



HOMECOMING

Homecoming 2015 was kicked off by a special Homecoming Chapel on Friday, October 16. Two very special alumni who definitely live out the mission statement of Grace Bible College were introduced. **Dr. Mulonge Kalumbula** was honored as our Young Alumnus of the Year. Mulonge graduated from GBC in 2000 with a BRE in Secondary Education, went on to earn his MA at Michigan State University and received his PhD from Western Michigan University. He and his family live in the Grand Rapids area and serve in their church and community regularly. Mulonge works for Grand Rapids Public Schools, supervising career and technical education curriculum.

His family, friends and co-workers describe him as: *“A man of highest character”* (Gary Cloud); *“An example of Christ to those he comes across in life”* (Sharon Admundsen), *“Welcoming... his heart for Christ and kids is infectious”* (Aaron Colvin); *“Someone with a heart for humanity and trusts in the Lord to guide his decision making”* (Chad Conklin). It was a privilege to honor him.

In addition, **Willamae Yeths Meyers** was honored as the Alumna of the Year. Willamae graduated from Milwaukee Bible Institute in 1956 with a three-year certificate. Everyone who knows her has nothing but abundant praise! Willamae taught public school before serving as Christian Education Director for GGF churches in California and Florida. She traveled the US, establishing Christian Education programs in several GGF churches, and was an integral part of the creation of the CBC (Coached By

Christ) Scripture memory program. Willamae reflects the love of Christ to everyone she meets, as her friends confirm: *“She inspired, cheered, and motivated me to do more than I ever thought I could”* (Pastor Cal Boduetsch); *“What I remember most about Willie is her joy and her love for the Lord. Even as a young girl I could see that she had a relationship with Christ that was beautiful and it drew me to her. And her laugh was so infectious”* (Karen Groeneveld Helmer); *“I’m not sure which was more impressive, the expertise she brought... or the energy and love she modeled”* (Pastor Craig McDonald); and *“Thank you, Willie for WHO YOU ARE- allowing the Lord to work through you in such a profound way -- changing lives for ETERNITY!”* (Bill and Virginia Connolly). Congratulations Willie! You have lived a life that honors your Savior.



In addition to being honored during chapel, Mulonge and Willamae were recognized once more at the Annual Alumni and Friends Banquet on Friday evening. This event is always one of the highlights of our weekend together. It’s a joy to see old friends re-connect and reminisce about their time here. It is especially exciting to see several generations from the same family come and celebrate together. Those who joined us this year at Homecoming 2015 left with many great memories! Reuniting with old friends and catching up, as well as meeting new friends left us all a bit nostalgic about our years at GBC. It was so special to spend time with some of our extended alumni family. If you weren’t able to make it this year, I hope you can join us next time (dates for 2016 are October 14 and 15)!

If you have Alumni News to share, please contact Juli Priolo at jpriolo@gbcol.edu.

Tigers of the Past

Former Athlete: Allen Durham, Men's Basketball 2007-2011

Allen Durham finished his college basketball career at Grace Bible College in 2011, after winning three consecutive NCCAA National Championships. He had quite the career as a Tiger -- earning All-American Honors three times, National Tournament MVP three times, as well as receiving the NC-CAA "Pete Maravich Player of the Year Award" in 2011. He currently holds the all-time records at Grace in scoring (2,467), rebounding (1,314), blocked shots (151), and field goals made (1,037).

In 2012, Allen began his professional basketball career in Romania, and has since played professionally in Finland, Israel, the Philippines, and France. Currently, Allen has chosen to stay in the States to play on the Dallas Mavericks' NBDL (National Basketball Development League) team: *The Texas Legends*. The NBDL is widely regarded as the top league in the world besides the NBA. In addition to playing in Texas this year, Allen is now owner of Grand Rapids' newest professional sports team, *The Grand Rapids Danger*, members of the ABA (American Basketball Association). His goal is to use the platform of professional basketball to grow and nurture the community of Grand Rapids

with volunteer work and donation drives, while putting an entertaining product on the basketball court for the community to enjoy. Another part of this endeavor will create an avenue for local basketball talent to continue their basketball careers after college. A current player on the team is 2015 GBC graduate Cameron Cramer.

Allen is still very involved in GBC Athletics. Throughout his time as a player and afterwards, he contributed time at speaking engagements and basketball camps. Before Allen left for his season in Texas, he worked with the current Grace Tigers team.

"Grace Bible College took me in when a lot of schools wouldn't give me a chance, and I'm very grateful for that, so I'm happy to help whenever time permits," Allen says.

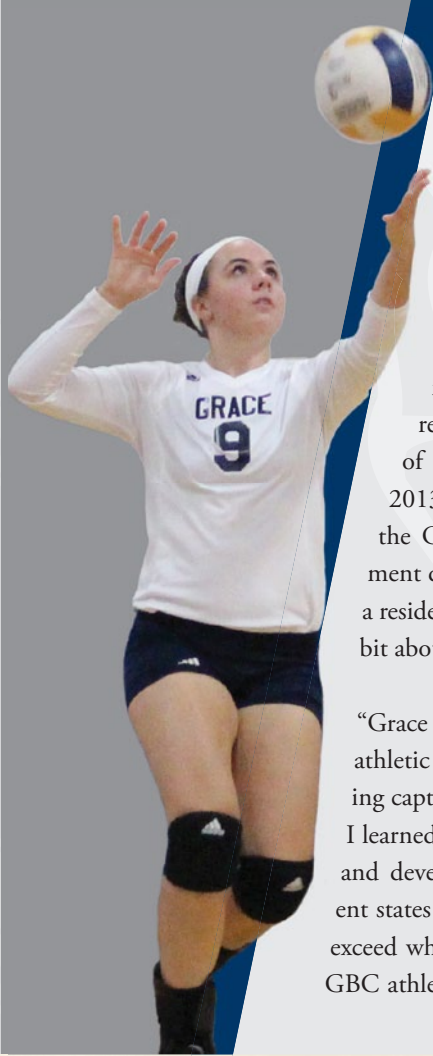
"Allen has had a much-publicized career, and much more could be said about his on the court greatness. My biggest compliment to Allen is that during his playing time at Grace and after, he never refused to help me, Grace, or the team in any capacity. He has been totally unselfish with his time to promote GBC. I am very proud of Allen's basketball accomplishments at Grace, but even more proud of his character and the man he is." - Coach Gary Bailey, Men's Basketball



ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP

Do you have a son or daughter attending Grace Bible College? Did you know there is a scholarship for children of GBC Alumni? Your student could qualify to receive a \$1,000 scholarship each year (\$500 per semester) they attend. Please check our website for further details or contact Juli at jpriolo@gbc.edu.





Tigers of the Present

Current Athlete: Abby Schultz, Women's Volleyball and Basketball

Senior Abby Schultz will graduate in April 2016 with dual bachelors' degrees from Grace Bible College and Davenport University (in religious education and sports management, respectively). Abby has been an important part of the volleyball and basketball programs since 2013. She has also been an influential member of the GBC community, working within the enrollment department as a student worker, and serving as a resident assistant in 2014. We asked Abby to share a bit about her journey at GBC:

"Grace has given me the opportunity to grow in my athletic talent and in my Christian leadership. By being captain of both the volleyball and basketball team, I learned how to 'stand up' in my Christian leadership, and develop friendships that last. Traveling to different states through athletics created memories which far exceed what I thought my college experience could be. GBC athletics gave me the passion to pursue my degree

and the desire to impact college athletics in the future. Of course, my experiences would not be the same without my incredible teammates and coaches! The teams I played on really became a family. Through early morning practices, off-season training, and late night games, my experiences at Grace have been some of the best moments of my life!"

"Abby has been a joy to have on the team -- on the court and off. She is a coach out on the floor for us, and she has been a great leader since the day she stepped on campus."

– Coach Rich Renzema, Women's Basketball

"Abby is a natural leader on the court. Her energy is infectious, and her hustle is unmatched. It has been a true joy spending the past few years with her making lots of crazy memories together. I know God will use her in mighty ways as she continues to seek His will for her life and career."

– Coach Becky Karsten, Women's Volleyball



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UPCOMING EVENTS - 2016

APRIL 30

Graduation & Commencement



MAY 5

National Day of Prayer



JUNE 27

Whitecaps Fundraising Event



AUGUST 22

GBC Golf Classic



OCTOBER 14-15

Homecoming & Alumni Weekend



DECEMBER 2

Gloria 2016

