

Healthy Church

COLLECTED WORKS



Foreword

Proverbs 29:18 in the King James Version says, “Where there is no vision, the people perish...” Eugene Peterson’s modern translation, *The Message Bible*, sheds light on this verse.

If people can’t see what God is doing,
they stumble all over themselves;
But when they attend to what he reveals,
they are most blessed.

Because of Jesus, we participate with him in the relentless pursuit of Healthy Church. Becoming the healthiest expression of church that we can be is the corporate vision of GCI.

We see who Jesus is in the three greatest virtues – Faith, Hope and Love. If this is who he is, then the ministries of the church will flow from these eternal qualities of Jesus. As we are attending to these ministries we will experience the promise of the proverb, we will be “most blessed.”

The purpose of this collection is to highlight the ways our congregations are living out Healthy Church within their neighborhoods. Thank you for being a member of our global family and for joining us in living and sharing the gospel. Enjoy the quotes, stories, graphics and photographs that paint an amazing picture of Healthy Church as it is taking shape across the global network of our beloved fellowship. And let’s draw ever closer to Jesus as we continue to participate with him and experience our church becoming the healthiest expression of faith, hope and love that we can be!

—Greg Williams, President



HEALTHY MINISTRY IS

*Team Based,
Pastor Led*

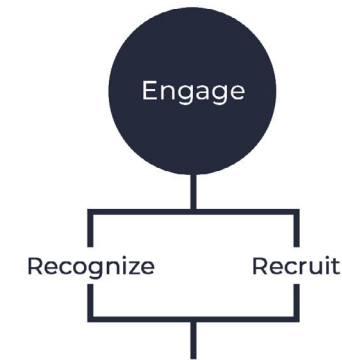
HEALTHY MINISTRY IS
TEAM BASED

The power of the Team Based, Pastor Led approach is that it opens wide the gate for all believers to find their place of participation with Christ and his church.
—Greg Williams, President

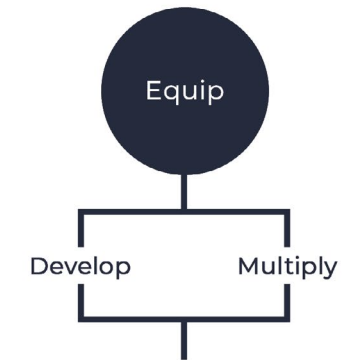


PASTOR LED

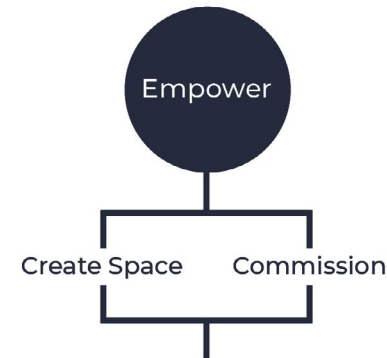
LEADER OF LEADERS PASTOR



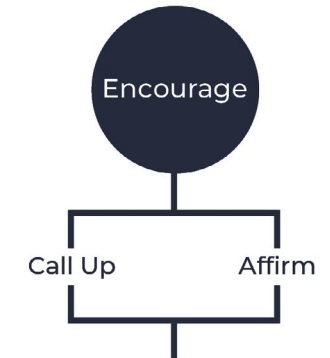
A pastor creates an environment of recruiting by modeling a pattern of recognizing and inviting others into the ministries of the church.



The pastor must differentiate between ministry workers and leaders. She or he must focus on developing ministry leaders.



In empowering leaders, a pastor must create ministry spaces for new leaders. Don't recruit and develop without making room for the apprentice to lead.



The pastor must understand that leaders are mainly volunteers and ministry can become difficult and the pastor needs to be attentive and encouraging.

Pastors no longer carry the ministry load on their shoulders. Instead they share the ministry with others. In community they experience the joys and sufferings of participating in Jesus' ministry, and thus more fully discover the presence of Jesus.
—Greg Williams, President



ENGAGE



EQUIP



ENCOURAGE



EMPOWER

HOPE FAITH LOVE

*A disciple is a follower of Jesus Christ,
and discipleship is the process of maturing
in Christ—learning how to live in and share
his life and his love with others.*

*Discipleship is an essential component
of any healthy ministry. In GCI, we
believe that a healthy church lives out her
participation in Jesus' ministry in the three
avenues of hope, love, and faith.*

*—Heber Ticas,
GCI Superintendent of Latin America*

GCI Ministry Avenues

Our focus on healthy church and the three avenues of hope, faith and love are applicable to any size group or congregation.

“We only have eight people in our group; how are we expected to have a champion or coordinator for the hope, faith and love avenues?” The simple answer is you aren't. While we encourage larger congregations to have hope, faith and love avenue teams, which work with the pastor in a team-based, pastor-led model, your small group is the team.

We do not have a “one-size-fits-all” approach to helping you be the healthiest expression of church/group you can be. With that said, we do believe every small group can and should keep the principles of our hope, faith and love avenues in mind in everything they do.

—Regional Director North Central, USA

Hope Avenue

The hope avenue is about worship. Is
Jesus being proclaimed in our church
gatherings? Is corporate worship inspiring
and are lives being transformed?
—Greg Williams, President

F O C U S E D O N

H  P E






HEALTHY MINISTRY IS TEAM BASED



PASTOR LED

Hope Avenue = The Worship Service

The ultimate goal of our worship services is proclaiming the good news of Jesus. The order of service creates a flow for both members and guests to meaningfully participate and respond throughout the service. For each portion of the service below, there should be gifted, equipped, and prepared individual(s) to lead the congregation. Communication and integration of the teams involved in the service is crucial to an inspirational time of worship.

CALL TO WORSHIP	A hymn of praise or scripture reading, and opening prayer.	
WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS	Greet the congregation, draw attention to the announcement bulletin, and update the congregation on necessary issues. Use Announcements to project the vision and values of the congregation.	
INTERCESSORY PRAYER	Intercessory prayer should be brief, mentioning the names of those who have requested prayer and, only if also requested, a short phrase describing the need. Requests should be made before the service. Detailed sharing of requests and updates should be done during small group gatherings and not the Sunday service.	
CONGREGATIONAL SONGS	A selection of psalms, hymns, and/or spiritual songs, that tie in with the theme of the sermon and rest of the service. Appropriate music may accompany the offering.	
OFFERING	The offerings are received and brought forward before the congregation. A prayer of thanksgiving may follow. This is also a good time to dismiss children and youth to their respective classes.	
SCRIPTURE READING	Key passage for the sermon read to the congregation. A moment of silence for the congregation to transition and prepare for the reading and hearing of God's Word may be appropriate.	
SERMON	A 30-minute sermon based on a passage of Scripture is given. Check out our RCL sermon outlines at equipper.gci.org to preach in alignment with the Christian Calendar. A brief prayer may conclude the sermon.	
COMMUNION	Each congregation is free to determine how often it will offer Communion, whether quarterly, monthly or weekly.	
BENEDICTION	The congregation rises to receive a blessing, acknowledging they are now being sent out to bless others. An optional closing hymn may be sung before the closing scripture or prayer.	



Hope Avenue Workshop

In March 2020, pastors from across the USA gathered in Cincinnati, Ohio for the 2020 Hope Avenue Workshop. Each pastor was encouraged to bring their Hope Avenue Champion along with their Worship Director. On the first day, Superintendent Heber Ticas spoke on the role of the Pastor. Regional Director Anthony Mullins followed on the role of the Hope Avenue Champion. Keysha Taylor wrapped up the day by addressing worship and some best practices for your worship service. The group attended a worship service the first evening where various aspects of the teachings were modeled. The second day began with a group question and answer session, followed by a send-off message by Michael Rasmussen, Superintendent, North America and Caribbean. Between each session, lively group discussions filled the room with lots of sharing and laughter.



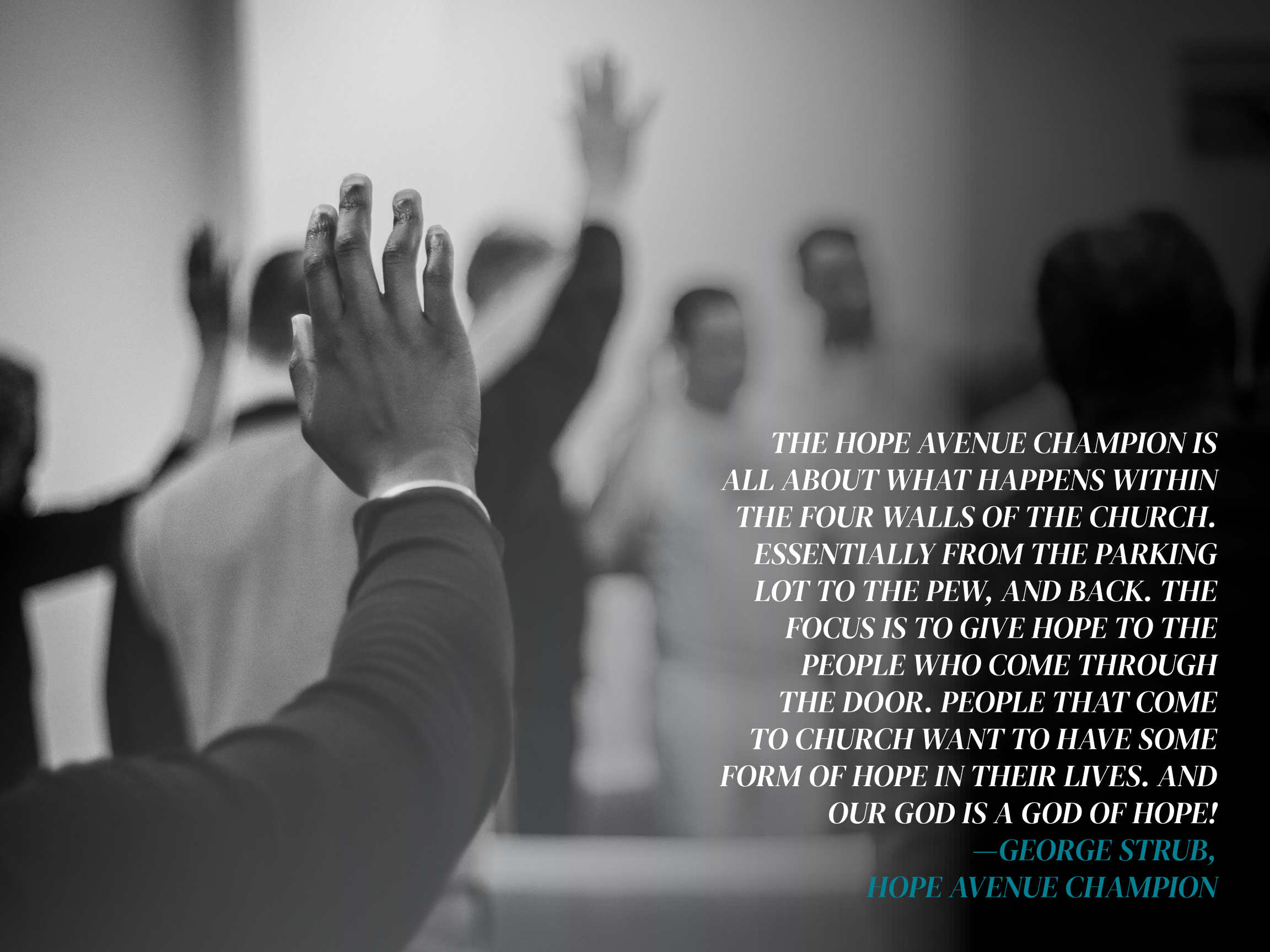
Inspirational Worship

The hope avenue is all about our worship service on Sunday. It's a time where we reflect and connect. Hope Avenue Champions point members to Jesus, reminding the congregation that God is the one inviting us to be fully present.

In our Call to Worship, we are becoming prepared to respond to God. We are joining Jesus in worship of the Father, who loves and calls to each of us first.



Grace Communion
Mexico City

A black and white photograph of a church congregation. In the foreground, a person's hand is raised in prayer, with fingers spread. In the background, other people are also raising their hands, creating a sense of collective worship. The image is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the gesture of prayer.

*THE HOPE AVENUE CHAMPION IS
ALL ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS WITHIN
THE FOUR WALLS OF THE CHURCH.
ESSENTIALLY FROM THE PARKING
LOT TO THE PEW, AND BACK. THE
FOCUS IS TO GIVE HOPE TO THE
PEOPLE WHO COME THROUGH
THE DOOR. PEOPLE THAT COME
TO CHURCH WANT TO HAVE SOME
FORM OF HOPE IN THEIR LIVES. AND
OUR GOD IS A GOD OF HOPE!*

*—GEORGE STRUB,
HOPE AVENUE CHAMPION*



Filipiniana Celebration Service

In September, GCI congregations in Glendora and Eagle Rock, California joined to host their first Filipiniana celebration. A Filipiniana is a special occasion where Filipino heritage and culture are celebrated through traditional Philippine folk songs, folk dances, and most importantly, food. Since we have a large Filipino community in the Los Angeles area, we wanted to celebrate them because we value diversity and unity in the body of Christ.

The combined worship service was led by the Eagle Rock hope avenue worship team. The rest of the Sunday service featured four speakers who gave short devotionals about identity, family, resilience and community as related to their unique experiences as Filipino Christians.

Following the worship service was a bountiful potluck of traditional Filipino foods, as well as a durian-eating challenge hosted by Pastor Bermie Dizon. After the delicious potluck was the entertainment portion of our celebration. This consisted of five different traditional Philippine folk dances, a medley of folk songs, and an opportunity at the end where we invited the audience to come up and attempt to dance the “Tinikling” (this involves jumping between two moving bamboo poles).

We are grateful to God and give him all the glory for the success of our first Filipiniana celebration! In the future, the Glendora church intends to make this celebration more of an outreach to the wider community so that those who aren’t attending a church can join in the fun and experience the amazing unity and diversity we have in the Father, Son and Spirit.



Blessing of the Children Service

As part of our missional rhythms in the love avenue at Comunion De Gracia Sun Valley, we have semi-annual services dedicated to blessing the children. Our first service for 2019 was held Sunday, March 24. Pastor Heber Ticas had the privilege to pray over and anoint 56 children, including two that were still in their mother's womb. Fourteen of these children were first or second-time visitors in the church.

Over the first three months of the year, the children had been learning about the fruits of the Spirit. They presented a play reflecting what they learned in their Sunday school, and participated in special songs to share with the congregation. In Comunion De Gracia, two of our declared values are missional living and children's ministry. Through these services, not only do we open a missional space for our congregation, but also the pastor gets to pray over and bless the children from church and some from our community.

We believe that our children are not the future church, but rather the present church. By creating these spaces for them, we are expressing to them that they are loved and valued. After being blessed, all the children had an opportunity to enjoy a time of fun and games.



Dedicating the Church Auditorium

On Resurrection Sunday, while visiting for the West African Leadership Conference, GCI President Greg Williams dedicated GCI Ghana's church auditorium on the church's 15-acre property at Kuntunse, 20 kilometers north of Accra, Ghana's capital city. The facility, which was started in the early 1980s as a small meeting place for Spokesman's Club, has undergone several changes, culminating in its current two-story auditorium, which can seat up to 1,000 members and guests.

President Williams, in dedicating the facility, prayed for God's blessings on the members who would use it for God's glory. He was assisted by Kalengule Kaoma, Superintendent, Africa, and Emmanuel Okai, Regional Director, West Africa.

The building is beautiful and modern, sitting on land that also contains a school, a soccer field, apartments and other church support facilities. Papaya, coconut and other trees populate the property, which is dotted with goats and chickens.

We are happy to report that the members in Ghana are enthusiastically participating with Jesus in sharing the gospel as a vibrant and healthy expression of him. The Kuntunse church is a shining example of a healthy church that is developing leaders, planting churches and has developed a local financial infrastructure that supports God's work in that region. They are planting new congregations around Accra. Eight of eleven churches in Ghana now have their own buildings. We thank God for what he is doing through his servants in this area and for their example of living and sharing the gospel in this healthy church environment.

HOPE FAITH LOVE

Worship is our response inside of Christ's perfect response. It is joining Jesus in worship of the Father. Worship can be done individually and with a group. When we gather to worship, we are sharing the hope we have in Christ—his birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension and return. When we worship in participation with Jesus, we are communing with him and sharing in the communion he shares with our Father and the Holy Spirit.

*—Rick Shallenberger, Regional Director
North Central, USA*

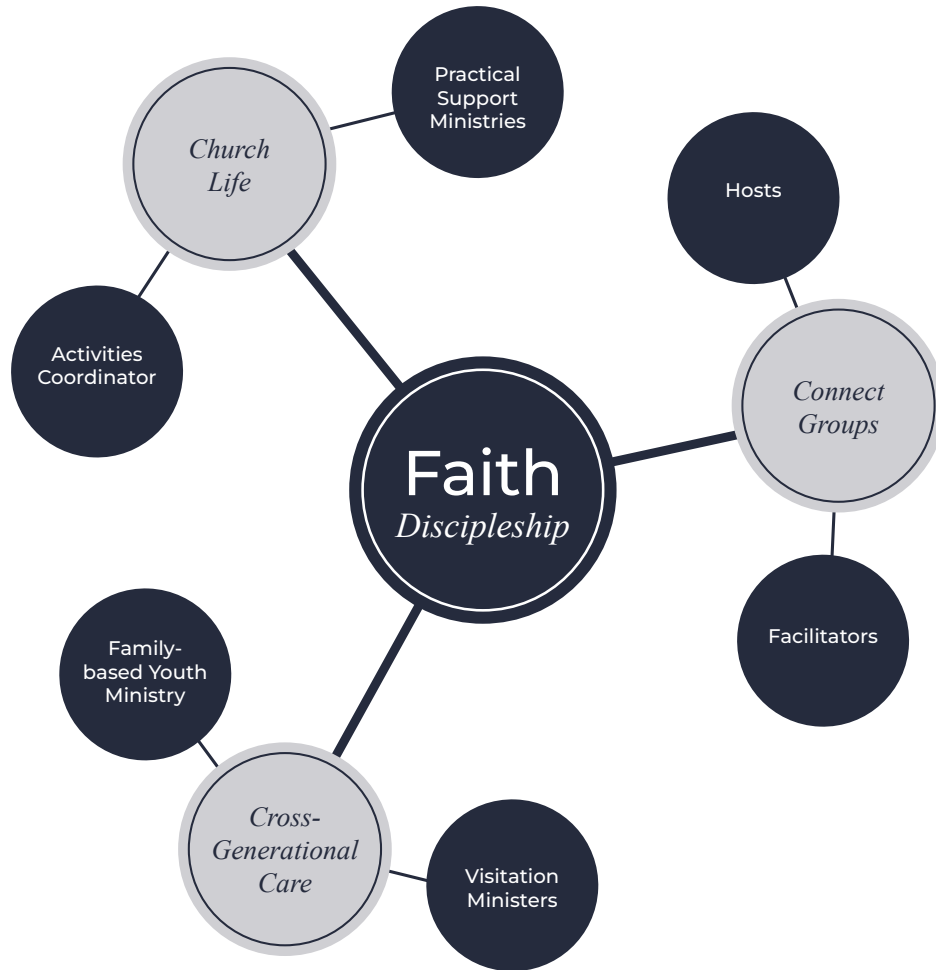
Faith Avenue

The faith avenue is about discipleship
– believers growing in their walk with
Jesus as well as their walk with their
Christian brothers and sisters.
—Greg Williams, President

FAITH FORWARD



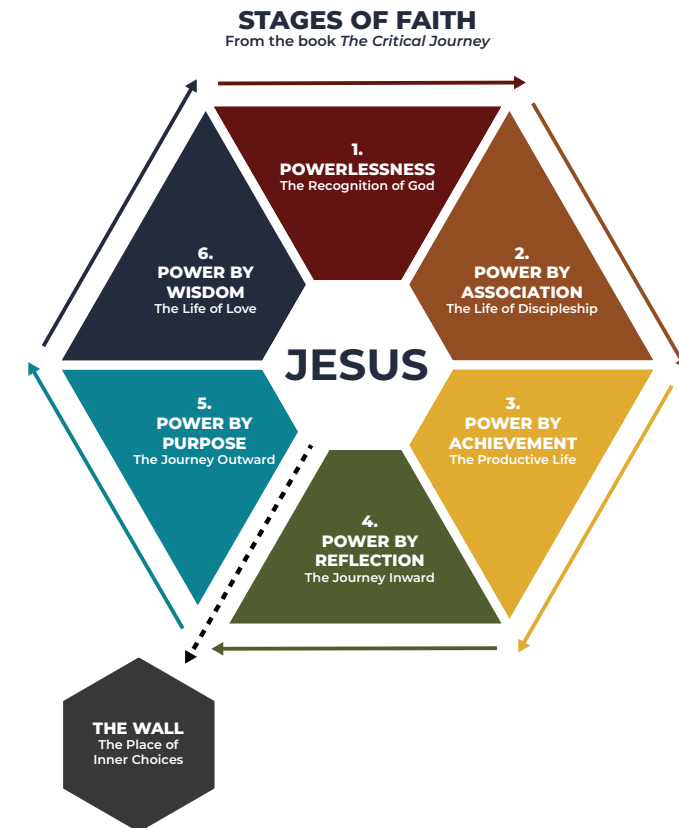
HEALTHY MINISTRY IS TEAM BASED



PASTOR LED

Faith Avenue = Church Life

The faith avenue is all about the care and growth of church members. Connect groups are an important aspect of the faith avenue because they foster spiritual growth. Discipleship is a life-long journey and not a one-time event. As the Holy Spirit guides us into deeper understanding of who God is, the development of our faith often follows through similar stages. Understanding the hallmarks and challenges of these stages can help us walk alongside and encourage other believers in grace and truth. The Stages of Faith chart can be a helpful tool in identifying the challenges and beliefs about God that members of your Connect group are working through.



Takeaways from Newly Launched Connect Groups

GROUP CURRICULUM: TRUTH AND LIFE CONVERSATIONS (TALC) SERIES ON THE SUBJECT OF DIVERSITY AND RECONCILIATION

"One person commented on how they'd never really considered diversity as a gift affirmed in unity in Jesus. There is enthusiasm to take these short-term connect groups into our community. We hope to have a community-based one by the end of May."
—Pastor Gabriel Ojih, Richardson, TX

GROUP CURRICULUM: GROUP INTERCESSORY PRAYER AND INTERACTIVE BIBLE STUDY

"The group prayer allows us an opportunity to bear one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2). Participants also attain a sense of unity & belonging. As we pray with others, we begin to empathize more with those in our group and those in our community. As we speak to one another in the group of God's love, we find it easier to speak of the joy of the Christian way to all those we meet."
—Pastor Tamar Gray, Cleveland, OH

GROUP CURRICULUM: WEEKLY GROUP VIEWING AND DISCUSSION OF "YOU'RE INCLUDED" VIDEOS

"Using videos that cover our Trinitarian theology, I get a lot of comments from members not knowing what we teach regarding certain doctrines and practice. You can see people get a lot of "aha" moments which is highly gratifying!"
—Pastor David Borum, Seattle, WA



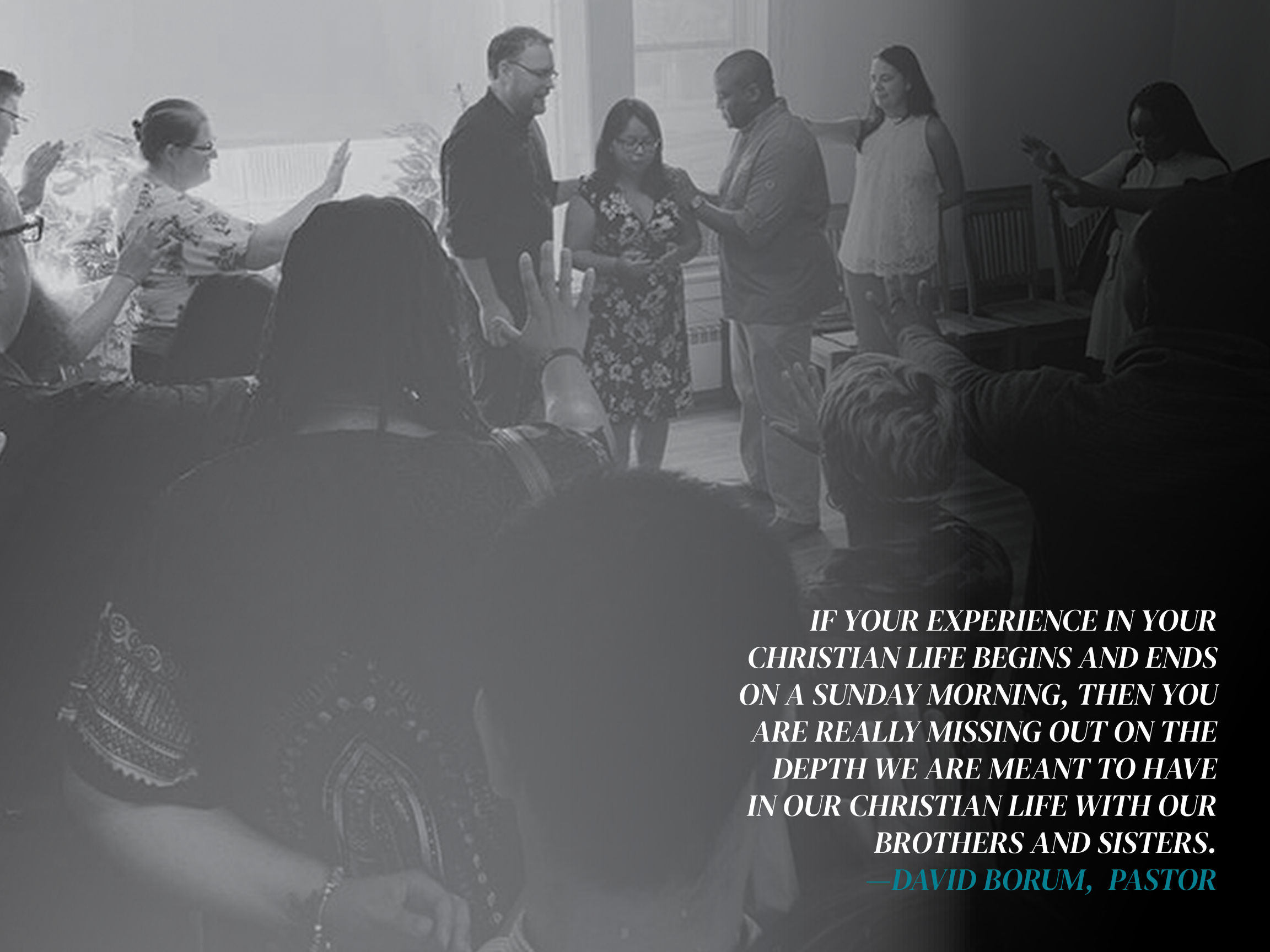
Church Life

Discipleship occurs in life-on-life situations. Through learning, eating, celebrating, and grieving together, Scripture is brought to life and "place-sharing" occurs. In shared spaces we encounter the living Christ in our relationships. Connect groups are designed to cultivate Christ-centered friendships that encourage, challenge, and focus our lives towards a growing relationship with Jesus.

Connect groups take us outside of our church walls and into the community. The atmosphere of a connect group is a great entry point for a visitor or person unfamiliar with church. Meeting in a home and with fewer people is more comfortable than a large group setting with unfamiliar rituals and routines. The faith avenue is the connecting point between the church and your neighborhood.



Grace Communion
Charlotte



***IF YOUR EXPERIENCE IN YOUR
CHRISTIAN LIFE BEGINS AND ENDS
ON A SUNDAY MORNING, THEN YOU
ARE REALLY MISSING OUT ON THE
DEPTH WE ARE MEANT TO HAVE
IN OUR CHRISTIAN LIFE WITH OUR
BROTHERS AND SISTERS.
—DAVID BORUM, PASTOR***



Encounter Night

Grace Communion Baguio hosted an Encounter Night of praise and honor to our triune God. It was an opportunity for young members to come and abide in the presence of The Holy One. The night consisted of free expression of singing and dancing, hearts in reverence.

GCI Youth Ministry (GYM) Baguio was officially launched and introduced by Justine Parcasio as a resource for the young people. There were 86 members and guests in attendance. The youngest was four years old, who sang and danced and listened with joy. Although primarily a faith avenue event, members were encouraged to invite friends. The atmosphere was richly blessed, filling each heart with a personal encounter of his great love. Again and again, we invoked the presence of the Holy Spirit, for where the Lord is, “dry bones awaken.”

During the devotional, Pastor Joseph spoke of Saul's encounter of Jesus, an encounter that brought transformation and changed lives.

At the end of the night we were reminded of God's reckless love, “overwhelming, never-ending, chases me down, fights ‘til I’m found. . .” Our response: there is only one way and that is Jesus! We are all living for him. Guests were given lanyards as a memento. His promise is to bring us from glory to glory! Church members who came to support alongside the worship team and worked behind the scenes had their fill and went home in abundance.

The event was held August 2, 2019 at the Function Hall of Gestdan Centrum, Baguio City.



GCIgnite Australasia

After a wonderful weekend gathering for young leaders from the Australasian region during Easter 2019, there were hopes of repeating such events. However, social-distancing due to the coronavirus soon cut these plans. An idea emerged during a National Ministry Team Zoom meeting of the possibility of using Zoom to host a GCIgnite event during Easter 2020. Planning evolved quickly and within a two-week period, young leaders from the Mooroolbark GCI congregation held Zoom planning meetings, and brought together two hour-long meetings for young leaders in the Australasian region, which were held on Easter Saturday.

Music tracks were put together making use of local young musicians. The process: one musician records the master track and shares with other musicians via Dropbox. Each records their part guided by the master track. All parts were then mixed using Audacity and synchronised with PowerPoint display of lyrics for screen sharing during Zoom sessions. There was an overall theme of “How do we creatively and with generosity live out our faith during these unusual times?”

The two hour-long sessions included prayer, scripture readings, discussion using breakout groups with young leaders facilitating each room, worship, an Easter devotional led by Pastor Bharat Naker, a Bible Project video on generosity and a Q & A session with a panel of pastors. During the break between the two sessions some participants stayed online to chat and play Pictionary together. The group reassembled wearing funny hats of choice for the second hour.

It was a successful first-time venture of this kind for GCIgnite, enjoyed by 30 attendees across several time zones from Western Australia, South Australia and the eastern states, along with Carl from Canada.



Women's Leadership Forum

From being greeted at the hotel door and meeting new faces the first night, to the end when we all knew each other's name and felt like sisters in Christ, the Women in Church Leadership Forum held in Hickory in April 2019 was an enriching gathering.

Pastoral Resident Elizabeth Mullins hosted and led the group of GCI leaders from the Southeast US. In our opening session, we discussed the importance of a women-only development gathering and of understanding our belonging in Christ. Fellowshiping with a group of like-minded women from different areas and backgrounds helped us understand our own experiences better, enabling us to better lead others. We had some downtime to fellowship between sessions and unpack individual discussions together.

The forum was co-hosted by Assistant Pastor Davina Winn, who shared her own story about finding her authentic voice in leadership. As a group we shared our church leadership stories, exploring our challenges while encouraging our sisters with advice and affirmation. Elizabeth led us again in a discussion on mentorship development, as well as the opportunity to form a cohort group in which we can have intentional ongoing support for one another. With Elizabeth's guidance, these conversations helped the group rethink our roles and actions while working as part of a leadership team.

Some highlights from the exit survey included appreciation that everyone had a voice and was given time to share their authentic stories. It was a unique opportunity to network with other women in GCI church leadership and celebrate the diversity of our female leaders within the church.

HOPE FAITH LOVE

It's true that discipleship is a life-long, gradual process beginning with evangelism (in various forms) and a person's response to the gospel. It is also true that we cannot transform people—the Holy Spirit transforms people in Christ. But the church is called to participate in the Spirit's process of making disciples. The discipling efforts of a healthy church need to be intentional, just as Jesus was intentional about the growth and development of his followers during his earthly ministry.

*—Randy Bloom,
Board of Directors Vice Chair*

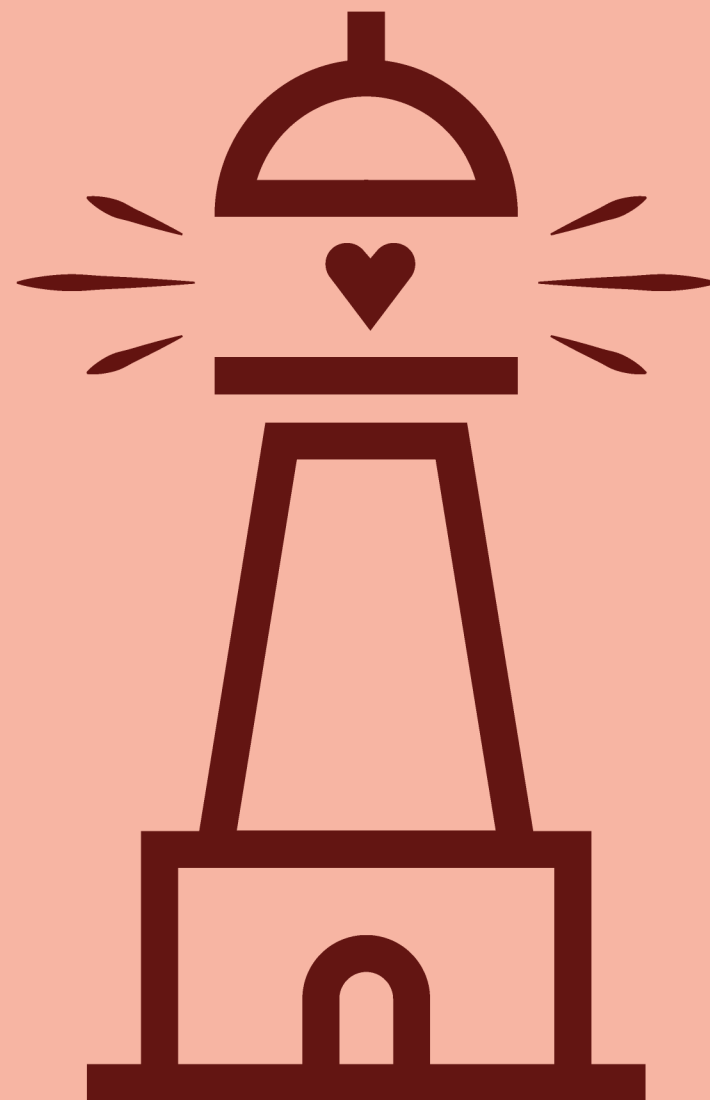
Love Avenue

The love avenue is about engaging in our church neighborhood and witnessing to the love of Christ. Are relationships being built and cultivated so that witnessing naturally happens?

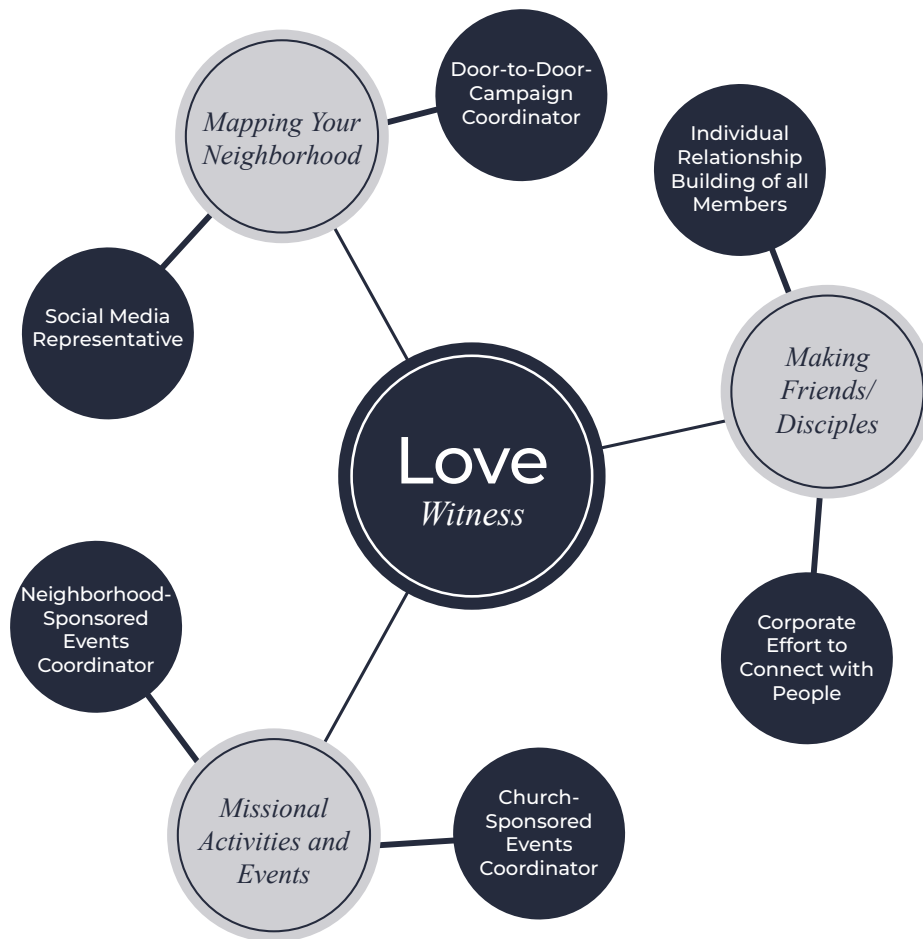
—Greg Williams, President

Compelled to

Love



HEALTHY MINISTRY IS TEAM BASED



PASTOR LED

Love Avenue Event Planning Checklist

- Brainstorming:
 - » Pray and work with your Love Avenue ministry leaders to develop an event that utilizes their gifts and abilities, and that connects with your target community.
 - » Choose an event that connects back to a ministry within your church. For example, if you plan an event for youth, make sure you have a children's ministry in your congregation for guests to regularly participate in afterward.
- Before the event:
 - » Know your why:
 - Develop a purpose. The whole team is working toward the same goal.
 - » Work out the details:
 - Date, location, budget, and enough volunteers with outlined roles and responsibilities for before, during, and after the event.
 - » At least 4 weeks before your event, invite your community:
 - Hand out invitations door-to-door.
 - Create a Facebook event
 - Encourage each member of your congregation to personally invite at least 5 friends.
 - » Equip your volunteers:
 - Make sure everyone understands their role and the purpose of the event.
- During the event:
 - » Have church contact information, service times, and connection cards available.
 - » Promote a come-back event.
 - » Have fun! Remember that we are participating with Jesus in loving our communities. The Holy Spirit is in us, empowering and strengthening us.
- After the event:
 - » Within 48 hours, follow up with the connection cards you received.
 - » Debrief with the event volunteers: What went well, what can you improve upon, etc.
 - » Be prepared to receive guests at your next church service.



Kenockee Grand Opening

"We're here today because God opened some doors and we were willing to step through those doors even though we had no idea where we were going."

—Grant Forsyth, Pastor

With their renewed excitement following the blessing of a permanent building, the Kenockee, Michigan congregation began to transform. They realized they needed to be intentional about reaching out to their community. After months of prayer, God began to open doorways to their community. "Instead of trying to get people to come through the door to see us, we decided, 'well what if we try going to them and help them with their events?' We began to increase from a dozen people to 20. It was rather humbling, and it just kept going."

When the church realized they needed to expand their building, they began to look for contractors willing to help at reduced prices. They were overwhelmed and surprised by the response from the community. Once their expansion project was complete, to show their gratitude to all who helped, they held a special event. They put up sponsor banners in front of the building, offering support to community businesses and showing off their good and faithful work. During their grand opening, they offered a building tour, as well as a celebration and festival on the church lawn for members of the community to enjoy music, food, games, and various other activities.

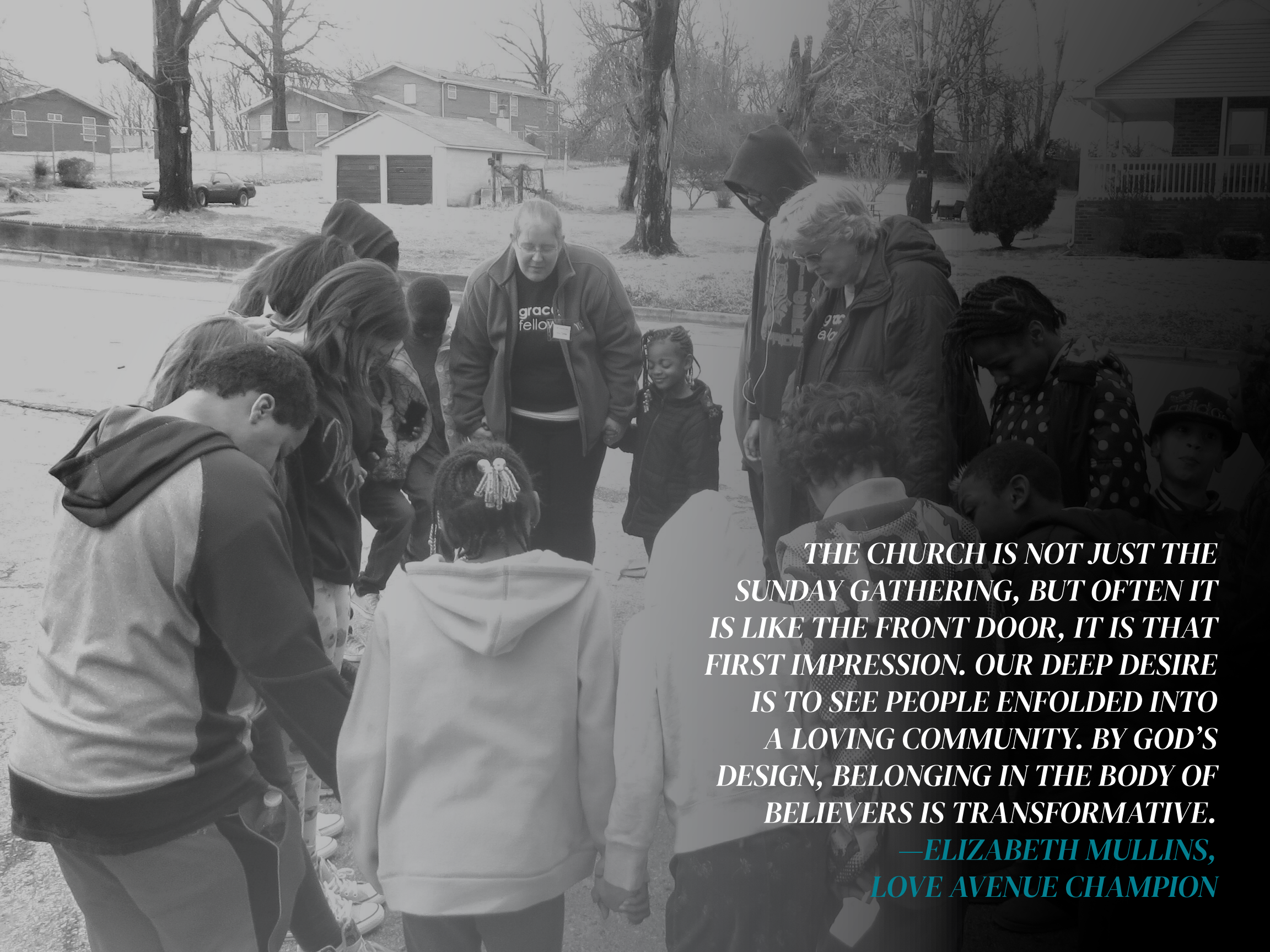
All of this was made possible by remaining faithful and stepping through the door God created, to serve and grow closer to their community.

Community Engagement

It is the person and presence of Jesus calling us to love; inviting us to join him in making new disciples; and empowering us through his Spirit to build the church and expand the kingdom. He calls us to corporately and individually engage within our neighborhood with tangible acts that reflect the love of God.

All outreach events inherently create pathways connecting back to the life of your church.





***THE CHURCH IS NOT JUST THE
SUNDAY GATHERING, BUT OFTEN IT
IS LIKE THE FRONT DOOR, IT IS THAT
FIRST IMPRESSION. OUR DEEP DESIRE
IS TO SEE PEOPLE ENFOLDED INTO
A LOVING COMMUNITY. BY GOD'S
DESIGN, BELONGING IN THE BODY OF
BELIEVERS IS TRANSFORMATIVE.***

***—ELIZABETH MULLINS,
LOVE AVENUE CHAMPION***



Living Love in Latin America

The stay-at-home orders in many Latin American countries have affected the population harshly. People in those communities struggle for necessities most days, and amid Covid-19, the struggles multiplied. GCI congregations in Sun Valley and Santa Fe Springs, California have partnered to support and encourage local congregations in El Salvador, Honduras, and Piura, Peru. They have engaged the love avenue with tangible acts of love and have joined Jesus in bringing hope and care to those in their communities.

Our congregation in Piura, Peru that is pastored by Ruth Nieves has committed to living out the love avenue by engaging their community missionally. She understands the opportunity that has been presented to her church and they are stepping out in faith.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Ruth and her love avenue Champions have prepared and distributed food for people waiting outside hospitals, sharing encouragement and listening to stories from community members. They have been able to provide tents and shelter to those who have camped out due to necessity; some members of the congregation have even committed to living in tents at the church, while they take shifts as chefs to those in need in their neighborhood.

While serving her community, Ruth said, "We have been able to see closely what God is doing. He has made our congregation walk down the love avenue listening to the different testimonies of people who were surprised because they did not have anything to eat and suddenly help appeared."



Serving the Bunda Community

Our Bunda congregation in Malawi is increasingly becoming an active member of its surrounding communities through different programs that are being introduced by the government and other volunteers at the church.

The government chose the Bunda church building to be a center for the Under-Five Clinic program to its surrounding communities. Under-Five Clinics are special facilities that provide medical care for children under the age of five. Our Bunda church was also chosen to host Safe Motherhood programs for its surrounding communities.

Recently the church has been privileged to have its Dug Water Well newly upgraded in recognition of the roles the church is playing through the Under-Five Clinic and the Safe Motherhood programs. The upgrade involved reinforcing and raising the wall of the well. The project was sponsored by Benefit Mankind from the United Kingdom. We thank God for the upgraded Dug Water Well. It will go a long way in providing safe water to its surrounding communities and church members.



Christian Center TOV in Tiel

Grace Communion International Netherlands and Flanders are going "outside the walls". Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, a building has been bought by a group of Christian churches and ministries, including our local GCI congregation, who have teamed up together to be a blessing for the inhabitants of Tiel. Grace Communion Netherlands co-invested in the building, and also brings in volunteers to join the activities. This building is a former elementary school, with 30 rooms, and is now known as Christian Center TOV.

Several members from our local GCI church "de Hoeksteen" (Cornerstone) are involved in different ways. Berdien Kreuger and Martin Hessel rent a room with their business to help people with debts, and Judith Dalm works there as well. Renée Blom works as an activity supervisor for people with a mental disability. Maarten de Moei is caretaker of the building, counselor, activity supervisor, and board member. Ferry Heeren is part of TOV's worship team. Denise de Moei is involved in the Christian bookshop, supports the counseling team and is a board member, and Hans de Moei helps with public relations and finances, and is part of the Supervisory Board of TOV.

At the official opening of the Christian Center, there was an all-day walk-in and an interdenominational worship service. This meeting was attended by about 120 people from all kinds of churches. God shows that he can still work miracles together with his church and that as believers confessing the name of Jesus and working together, great things can happen. The common factor to work together as different churches to make Christ known in Tiel and surrounding areas is godly love. We look forward with much positive anticipation, trusting God in what he will do with TOV and Grace Communion for the good of the community of Tiel.

HOPE FAITH LOVE

Paul reminds us that love never fails (1 Corinthians 13:8). God's love is in us and his love ensures the victory. We need to be confident of who we are in Christ, confident in our participation, and confident that God's love in us will motivate us and encourage us as we actively reach out to engage God's dearly loved children in our communities.

—Sam Butler, Pastor

GCI IS COMMITTED TO

Healthy Church



Next

GENERATION LEADERS

Christians in general should be passionately committed to discipling emerging generations. This is something that should be a given. First of all we want to be like Jesus, so we should make disciples like Jesus made disciples. He had a special relationship and he gave special importance to children and youth, and he said that they were a vital part of the gospel story. So for that reason alone we should be excited to engage emerging generations.

Personally speaking, when I think about Gen Z in particular, more than any other generation, I believe, Gen Z is connected to a wide diversity of people. Their networks consist of a wider slice of the human experience. They're engaging with more information than any other generation, and so the prejudices, the political divisions, the terror and religious conflict that divide our society—for many of them, those things just don't compute, they don't see it, they don't get it, and for the most part they are looking to find a better way.

If a movement within Gen Z can catch hold of the liberating Trinitarian theology, then I believe this generation can usher in an unprecedented time of unity in the Christian church.

—Dishon Mills, Pastor and Generations Ministry Coordinator USA



GC Next

The GCNext leadership team exists to catalyze emergent leader participation in healthy church vision at the local and regional level.

The team does this by partnering with local leaders to build a network of youth and young adult emergent leaders, provide ministry training opportunities for emergent leaders, connect emergent leaders to ministry mentorship and leadership opportunities within the life of the local church, and cultivate a culture of cross-generational fellowship and leadership development.

We hope to accomplish a dynamic generation of mature Christian leaders participating in the ministry of Jesus, engaging in the life of a GCI healthy local church, and leading fresh expressions of church.



GC Launch

GCLaunch was a weekend celebration and leadership development event for high school juniors and seniors within GCI's Generations Ministry. Over the course of the weekend, participants were introduced to GCI leaders and the Home Office Team. They received a behind-the-scenes look at the ministries of GCI.



GC Ignite

GC Ignite creates a space for young leaders to come together for shared learning, intentional development, and an opportunity to be invited to greater participation in Jesus' ministry through GCI. This year young adult leaders in Australia, Latin America, and the United States organized GC Ignite events for their regions. During each of these events participants were encouraged by each other and by people with more experience and wisdom to be the next leaders of GCI churches.



Ministry

TRAINING CENTERS (MTCs)

The MTC offers pastoral residents an experience similar to that of graduate students in major universities. Graduate Assistants devote about half of their time to academic study, in which they immerse themselves in coursework. They complement that mode of training with half-time service, for which they receive a livable wage, supporting the activities of their department. Graduate assistants work in a cohort together, learning from one another and from mentors. Such embodied, personal relations comprise a community of professional formation. This is a tried and tested mode of training adopted by universities around the world. In a similar way, the MTCs will work in synergy with academic study through GCS to enhance ministry preparation with relational and embodied practice in a community of spiritual formation.

—Dr. Kerry Magruder



Baton Passing

MAKING SPACE FOR NEW LEADERS

We never retire from being a Christian. Yet it is normal and healthy that we do retire in a timely fashion from roles, offices, ministries and functions within the church. Yes, sometimes this can be challenging, even daunting. There can be a tendency to want to hold on, even a feeling that it is not responsible to “let go” or step down. And sometimes there is the accompanying notion that retirement means the end – the end of being useful, engaged, productive. The notion that stepping down means stepping away is erroneous.

Holding on is not a recipe for healthy church cultures and healthy, vital congregations. Healthy church cultures of faith, hope and love understand, affirm and support the reality that there are seasons in life, as Ecclesiastes so eloquently tells us. And retirement, rotation, renewal is a healthy and desirable part of church life.

—John McLean, ACCM Director



Greg Williams, GCI President

The GCI Presidential Passing of the Baton ceremony was held on October 14, 2018 in Charlotte, NC, where Dr. Joseph Tkach passed the baton of GCI's presidency to Dr. Greg Williams.

Joseph Tkach served in the denomination as an ordained minister since 1976, and also served in the role of denominational president from 1995 to 2018. When asked to share his thoughts about passing the baton, Joseph Tkach said, "What makes this historic for us is this is a peacetime transition, so to speak. This is a very smooth and seamless transition, which is the way I think God likes things to be done—in peace and order, and decently. I am very pleased God has blessed this transition."

Greg Williams' pastoral ministry within GCI launched in 1986 when he was ordained, with his wife Susan by his side. Within GCI, Greg has served as a Pastor, a Festival Coordinator, GenMin National Coordinator, Intern Program Coordinator, and Regional Pastor.

When asked what he enjoys most about being part of GCI, Greg said, "The national and international relationships of some of the most interesting, loving and diverse people across God's green earth. As Joseph Tkach Sr. often said, 'We are family!' And I love the GCI family." Greg's value of relationship and community shapes his leadership style "I refuse to engage in the mission Jesus has given us apart from the company of others, and I am pleased with the amazing people that God has placed on our team."



Daphne Sidney, Superintendent

With much joy and celebration, Daphne Sidney was installed as the new Superintendent for Australasia. This milestone was a high point of the Australasian conference/celebration weekend and was performed during church services in Brisbane on Sunday, February 16, 2020, before a packed hall of enthusiastic worshippers. President Greg Williams and his wife Susan were there, and it was a special honor to have Greg pray over Daphne as hands were laid on her to appoint her into this role.

Daphne's extensive experience includes pastoral ministry in Australia, India, The Philippines and the Solomon Islands. Her husband Bill was previously Regional Director in the Philippines, where Daphne earned a Master's Degree and was deeply involved in ministry and mission. The plan for an intentional, prayerful, patient and professional succession for Daphne into the Superintendent's role has been underway for the past three years, said retiring Superintendent John McLean. "She has served in various capacities in the national office, most recently as Supervisor of Ministry for the past year. Daphne has a real heart for God, and for people," he said. "She brings great experience in ministry and mission to the role. Daphne is a life-long learner, who really reflects Jesus in her Christ-like desire to serve the interest of others. She will do an excellent job as Superintendent".



Jeff Broadnax, Regional Director

On May 1, 2020, after serving as Associate Regional Director with Rick Shallenberger for six months, and Regional Director Randy Bloom for nine months, Jeff Broadnax accepted the role as Regional Director, Eastern US.

Jeff joins our team with many years of experience. He was ordained as an elder in 1989 and has served in pastoral positions in nine different congregations across five states from the west to east coast. He has worked with teens and young adults across the nation as our Generations Ministry Coordinator (GenMin). He also teaches the Trinitarian Youth Ministry class for Grace Communion Seminary. Along with Jeff, we are blessed to gain the wisdom and insight of his lovely wife Karen. We are thankful God continues to provide qualified individuals who love God, this denomination and all her members.



Dishon Mills, GenMin National Coordinator

On January 2021, Dishon Mills accepted the role of Generations Ministry Coordinator USA, handed off from Regional Director Jeff Broadnax.

On his opportunity to pass the leadership baton, Jeff said, “Dishon has been richly blessed with gifts perfectly suited to lead the discipling, equipping, and sending of those who serve in intergenerational ministry. I can’t wait to see how the Lord uses him on a national level through GenMin. Like a runner who has given his all and left it on the track, I release the baton and become his biggest cheerleader as he discharges his duties on his leg of the race.”

Dishon grew up in our denomination, and by the grace of God, returned with his wife, Afrika, in their adulthood to plant churches, and eventually pastor the congregation in Boston, Massachusetts. His history of mentoring and equipping young leaders, along with his own journey in the denomination, is a story, he says, in which God brought him full circle and equipped him uniquely for this new role.

Dishon describes this new chapter: “My friend Jeff Broadnax and others blazed a trail that I am grateful to follow. It is humbling to be placed in a position to assist in the spiritual care for the young people of our denomination in the US. Fortunately, God has proven himself to be a God who can do big things with small things.”



Passing the Baton in Stoystown

On February 7, 2021, Regional Director of the Eastern Region, Jeffrey Broadnax, came to New Hope Community Church in Stoystown, PA, to officially pass the baton of leadership from Pastor Bruce Metz to Pastor J. Bradley Reed and his wife, Associate Pastor Marlene Reed. Bruce will continue to serve as an elder within the congregation.

There is deep-felt appreciation for the love and work that Bruce and Sharon bestowed upon GCI Stoystown congregants over the last 20 years. Although stepping out of the pastoral role, Bruce and Sharon will still help within the congregation and community—a journey that began in 1969 and goes on forever.

Marlene grew up in our denomination, and Brad joined in 1988. They come to the congregation with a missional spirit and a desire that all people come into a personal relationship with Jesus and understand that life's journey is all grace.

Both Brad and Marlene have volunteered at GCI SEP So Cal. They are active members in their community, having worked with their local Girl Scouts, youth basketball program, high school band, and church youth group. Marlene has worked with the local community theater, and Brad has been part of a local singing quintet. They had an outpatient physical therapy clinic that closed its clinic doors six years ago, but kept its home health department running until one year ago. They currently host a bi-weekly Bible study group at their home.

*What Does
Healthy Church
Mean to You?*

We asked church members to answer the question, "What does healthy church mean to you?" This is what you had to say:

A church is sick and, indeed, dead without the following frame of mind—on each member: “What is my contribution to the ministry?” And “What impact would I have left, when I die?” Such a person spurs improved ideas in advancing the gospel.

Andrew Masuku

A healthy church has their eyes completely on Jesus and allows the Holy Spirit to have full reign in our lives. We love each other and are showing the love of Christ to those not yet aware of the relationship that he desires to have with them.

Patricia Bigley

Committed believers following the Holy Spirit being available to love, teach, preach, reaching and living out the righteous life of the gospel message!

Lawrence

A healthy church is one that is reachable, and is reaching by and through the Holy Spirit nurturing others. It's ministry that is other-centered and focused on loving.

Abraham Thomas Jr.

Healthy Church happens when we are united in love to share the love of God with others! True teamwork focused on the shared life we have in Jesus! A Healthy Church seeks Jesus' good will above all.

Jerome Ellard

Healthy church means being honest about our brokenness while acknowledging the abundant grace that carries us through it all. It is living in the truth of what it means to be a child of God “under construction.” It means continually growing in our ability to trust in the righteous will of God at all times, in all things.

Thomas Friedrich



Benediction

The revelation that the Lord has given Grace Communion International is the Triune God that is revealed in Jesus. Jesus, the perfect image of God the Father, is the head of the church and gives us the promise that the church will remain throughout all ages. Jesus is the chief evangelist of his church, chief worship leader of his church, and chief disciple-maker. He gives us the wonderful opportunity to join with him as he builds his church, inspires his church, and sustains his church. It is in Jesus that we see and share what God is doing.

—Greg Williams, President



3120 Whitehall Park Drive, Charlotte, NC

Copyright 2021 Grace Communion International. All rights reserved.

