

# Connecting people to Christ and to each other

Grace Church LaCenter

...where Grace happens...

Our 2014 Narrative Budget

Discovering...

Equipping...

Connecting...

Sending...



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Our goal...  
“To be a church  
that is Spirit-led,  
scripture-based, and  
prayer-empowered  
that actively involves  
its people in  
worship,  
relationships, small  
groups, and  
service.”





# “CATCH ON FIRE AND OTHERS WILL LOVE TO COME WATCH YOU BURN.”

— JOHN WESLEY



Pastor Jamie Lee  
...Follower, not a fan...

*“It’s going to frustrate you. It’s going to wear you out. But I think you will absolutely love it...”*

That was my first introduction to Grace United Methodist Church through a phone conversation with my District Superintendent, Sky McCracken. I was being moved to a new appointment, somewhere in Ballard County. I had never been to the church building before, and since I had been in a different district for a few years, had only vaguely heard of it.

Fast forward three years. I’m nearing the end of my third year as pastor here, and honestly, I can’t imagine being, or doing, anything other than shepherding this flock. We have seen lives changed because we weren’t afraid to take a few risks. We have seen obituaries rewritten because we weren’t afraid to get into the ditches with those who crossed our paths. We have seen dignity restored and community built around a hot meal. But even more importantly than that, we have seen what happens when disciples are created as folks allow the fire of the Spirit to be kindled within them. Something changes, and I wish I could explain it, but I can’t. I can tell you what it looks like though...former dopers and dealers become mentors in the faith...those who feel they aren’t worthy are shown that they are indeed creatures of sacred worth...and people who have lost hope because they felt no one cares, are reminded that they are children of the living God, precious in his sight.

Are we your typical United Methodist Church? No, we’re not. But in my opinion, when John Wesley penned those words at the top of the page, he had in mind exactly what is happening at Grace every week.

In the pages of this booklet, I invite you to hear the stories that people are telling about Grace Church LaCenter. How can you measure the value of someone saying to you, “I have never felt more loved in a church in my whole life.”? How can we take stock of the blessings that have been given to us through the life of a person we used to see as *“just another person in need”* when that person becomes a friend? How can we celebrate the generosity of folks who help keep us warm and dry in the winter, cool in the summer, and provide fresh water to an entire village a half a world away?

The stories in the pages to follow, and the areas of ministry that you will read about, are only possible when we give generously, with thanksgiving for what God is doing in our lives and in the lives of those who are touched by the ministries of Grace Church. This booklet, our 2014 Narrative Budget, is designed to help give you an idea of how your faithful giving to the ministries of Grace Church really does change lives, not only today, but for years to come. You really do make a difference in this community.

I invite you to spend some time looking through these pages. What you will find are stories of how God is faithful, yesterday, today, and tomorrow. It won’t be just words, though. You will find charts, graphs, and pictures that will speak more than words on a page can. After you have spent some time with these pages, I ask that you prayerfully consider how God is calling you to respond through your giving to God through the ministries of Grace Church LaCenter.

Words cannot express how proud and humbled I am to be able to tell folks, “That’s Grace Church, and I’m their pastor.” Your love and generosity never cease to amaze me.

Peace,  
Jamie



# Forward in Faith...Growing with Grace



## Believe It or Not

If one had envisioned the presence of the LORD on Old Highway 60 a few years ago (much less near a Dollar General store and between the towns of La Center and Barlow) and wrote about it in the local paper, I ask myself, would there have been anyone in this area to have really believed it? That question burns in my mind. But you see, it doesn't matter for it now exists. For from out of God's calling and directions and those who followed in FAITH it is at that location known throughout the area as Grace Church.

One thing that I have learned from being blessed to be involved in this transformation is that one had better hold to his hat when the LORD is at the wheel. Furthermore one should not look back but only look forward—because HE sets the course and you are to follow and it will always be the right path.

I have learned that GOD is faithful to the faithful no matter what—as HIS paraphrased word would say (my version) and as found in the Gospel of John—"HE sees what you are inside—not what you sometime appear on the outside." I have also been confirmed by the fact that HE listens and answers prayer no matter what—in HIS time.

HE has led us this far and HE certainly will lead us into the future if we, as Grace Church, continue to be faithful, scripture based and always led by the Spirit bathed in prayer.

One more thing—"Do not be afraid to step out of the boat....."

Blessings,  
Randy

## Stepping out in faith...

That's exactly what we did 10 years ago. Several from the LaCenter Methodist and Barlow Methodist congregations had a vision of one church, meeting together to grow in Grace and become Disciples of Christ. The LaCenter church building was sold, and we were given the opportunity to meet each Sunday morning for worship in the Ballard Elementary gym. Five years later, we were blessed to be able to build our existing building, and what a blessing it has been. We have seen lives changed through Grace and have seen new ministries begun—Celebrate Recovery, Grace's Table, and the GUMY youth group to name a few. Now it's time to step out in faith once again as we look forward to the second phase of the building program. What an exciting time it is as we look forward to what God has in store for Grace.

- Alicia



STEPPING INTO  
THE FUTURE...





## Introducing...A Narrative Budget

Welcome to a new way of considering your annual support for the work of our church. Since the financial commitments of members and friends serve as the foundation for our congregational spending plan, the leadership of the church wants you to see how your giving supports the ministries that we cherish and enables the stories of transformation told within these pages.

Each page of this narrative budget describes an element of our ministry, identifies the components and costs associated with that ministry, and shows a single amount that we feel will be required to carry out each of those ministries. Included in each section are portions of things such as staff time and salary, administrative costs, operating expenses, and programming costs all dedicated to that particular element of ministry.

You'll see charts and percentages to help put the ministries of Grace Church in perspective. Hopefully, the pictures will speak louder than the charts and numbers as we get to see how your gifts in action are changing lives.

Our leadership team will continue to monitor spending based on actual and anticipated giving, and any member of the church is welcome to ask any questions they may have. We hope that this open, and living, approach to describing our giving at work will help us connect even more closely to the ministries we love, and that in doing so, we will gain an even clearer picture of what our gifts support. Thank you so much for your generous giving and support of the ministries of Grace Church.

### Our funds at work to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the of the world

Grace Church 2014 Narrative Budget

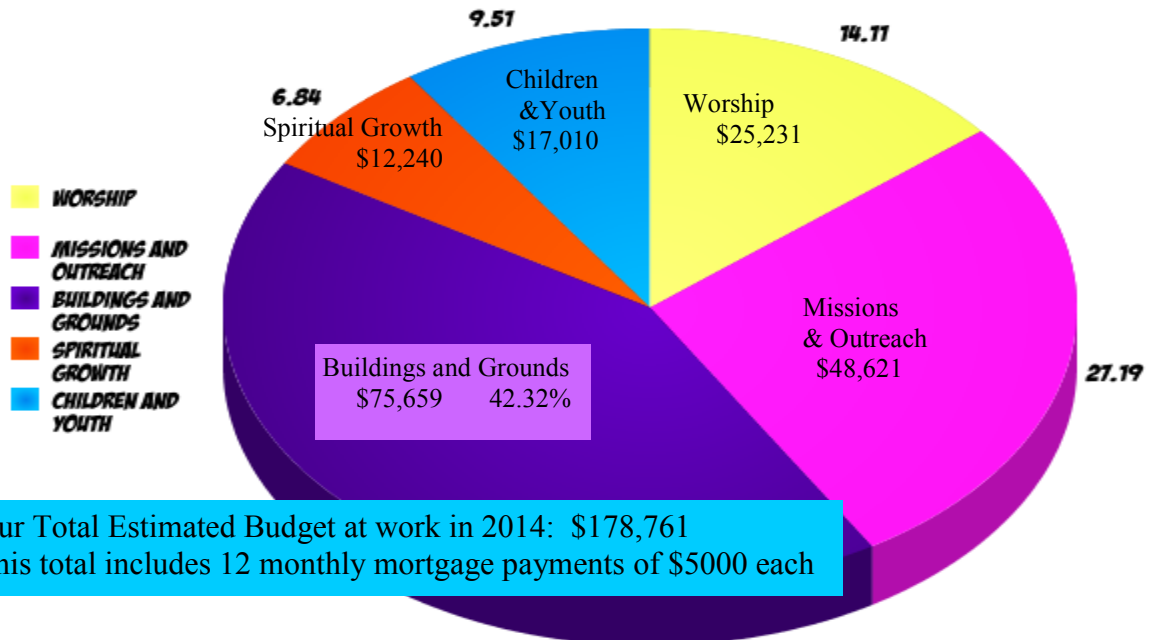
Worship:  
\$25,231

Missions and  
Outreach:  
\$48,621

Building and  
Grounds:  
\$75,659

Spiritual  
Growth:  
\$12,240

Children and  
Youth:  
\$17,010



*"They" said it would never work.*

*"They" said, 'If it will work there, why wouldn't it work here just as well?'*

*"They" said there was no way we could take two congregations with a new vision, and do anything but fail...*

*... but what "they" didn't count on was the power of God working through the faith of his people.*



# Make Worship count...

Here at Grace Church, our celebration service is a little different. It's a little more laid back. It's a little louder. It's a little more diverse. We try to start on time and end on time, but it doesn't always work. It's not for everyone...but it's not for us to begin with.

From the beginning, the phrase "that doesn't work anymore" has driven worship design. It guides everything from the atmosphere, dress, and music. We are intentional about engaging those who may not connect with a more formal worship experience, while at the same time respecting and honoring the traditions from whence we came.

That's why we are able to celebrate the diversity we have during our worship celebrations. All ages, races, nations, and creeds are welcome as we come together to celebrate what a never changing God has done for our lives in an ever changing world.

We are working to make all of our life together a celebration, and incorporate acts of worship into every area of our life together as a church.

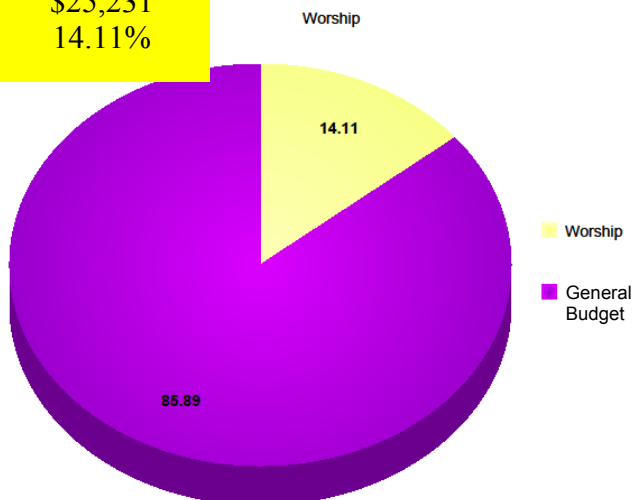


"So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life - your sleeping, eating, going -to-work, and walking-around life - and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him."

**Romans 12:1 (The Message)**



Worship:  
\$25,231  
14.11%



**Our Worship ministry includes:**  
Worship leadership and sermon preparation  
Copyright licensing  
Projection equipment and maintenance  
Audio equipment and maintenance  
Instruments  
Worship space decoration and supplies  
Ministry Administrative support

Refuse to be content with just the knowledge of God...  
...but insist on experiencing his presence.

(Kerri Weems)



# Make Missions & Outreach count...

"Let my heart be broken with the things that break God's heart" — Bob Pierce, World Vision founder



Grace Church seeks to be a place where the love of God isn't just talked about, but is shown...where we don't just give it lip service, but actually get our hands dirty...where we may not be able to hand out cash but we can always hand out grace. Sometimes it's easier to just write a check, but we have seen lives changed when we personally get involved...sometimes the lives that are changed are ours.



**J**esus, undeterred, went right ahead and gave his charge:

"God authorized and commanded me to commission you: Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life, marking them by baptism in the threefold name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Then instruct them in the practice of all I have commanded you. I'll be with you as you do this, day after day after day, right up to the end of the age."

(Matthew 28:18-20)

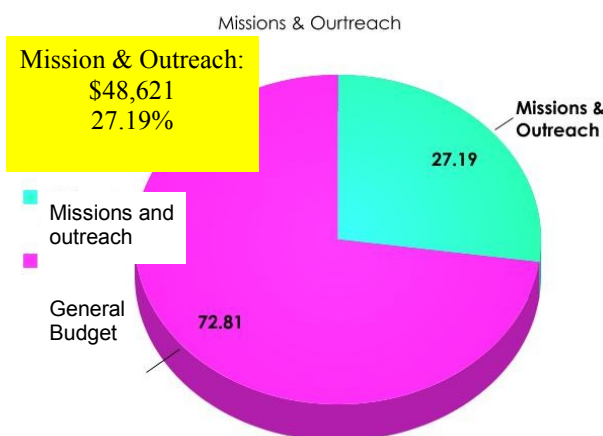


**GRACE'S TABLE**



Mission Blitz 2014

"THE GOSPEL IS ONLY GOOD NEWS IF IT GETS THERE IN TIME" — CARL F. H. HENRY



Our Missions and Outreach Ministry includes:

- Mission Leadership and Coordination
- Ministry Administrative Support
- Addictions & Family Counseling

Local Outreach Events include:

- Grace's Table, Family Focus, Celebrate Recovery
- Special Olympics, Relay for Life, St. Mary's Food Pantry, The Gideons International, Paducah District Mission Blitz, 30 Hour Famine, UMCOR, our UMW, our UMM, Jesus Wells, Cub Scout Pack 142

...And our apportioned giving through the annual conference





# Make Children and Youth count...

It's taken several years, but Grace has finally organized a youth group. The GUMYs were started last year, but this year have become more organized, electing their first president, taking on mission projects, spending time in fellowship with each other, and moving into their youth center upstairs. This wouldn't have been possible without the support and dedication of the people who are Grace Church, and who see the importance of creating dynamic and life changing ministries for their youth and children.

Are we where we want to be with the youth ministry? Not yet, but we're getting there. The vision is for the GUMYs to become a self supporting ministry of Grace Church, and actually be able to give back to help support the mission of the church.

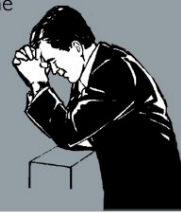
It is because of the hearts of our youth leadership team, and the generous support of the people of Grace, that this is becoming a reality.



Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."



Totally doing my quiet time today instead of surfing the Internet. #winning



Children & Youth:  
\$17,010  
9.51%

Children & Youth

Children & Youth

9.51

Children & Youth  
General budget

98.49

General budget

Because you're young  
**You're torn between a world of hate**  
And a world of dreams.  
*So much to lose, so much to gain,*  
So much to fight for,  
**SO MUCH TO CHANGE!**

Our Children & Youth ministry includes:

- Staff leadership
- Administrative support
- Curriculum
- Resources for training volunteers
- Event resources
- Program materials and supplies
- Vacation Bible School



# Make Building and Grounds count

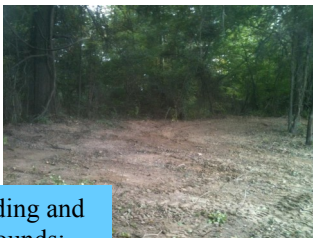
It started with a prayer circle in the middle of a corn field. The idea of purchasing nearly 24 acres for a church is almost unheard of in most places, but the people of Grace realized that God was giving them an opportunity to do something huge. Prayers were said, vision was cast, hope was born, and Grace Church stepped out on faith. Having purchased, and paid for the land, phase 1 of construction was begun.



“From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.”  
Luke 12:48

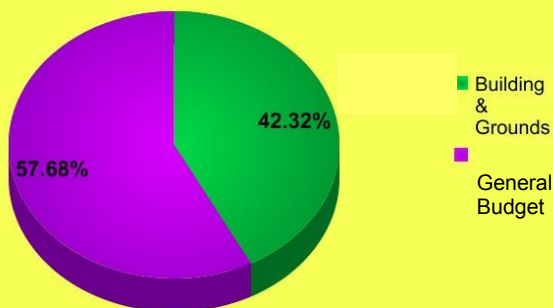
From a nearly \$1.1 million leap of faith to construct Phase 1, to having a mortgage now of only \$550,000, Grace is quickly moving towards Phase 2, which will more than likely be the Worship Center. God is continuing to bless Grace, we believe, because we have placed all of our trust in God. With man this would not have been possible, but with God, all things are possible.

The dream now is to retire the debt from Phase 1 as soon as possible, so that Grace can continue to follow God’s call and begin construction on Phase 2. In the meantime, there is much to be done. We are in the process of constructing a prayer garden on the east side of the campus by the creek, a walking trail that will circle the perimeter of the campus, expanded community garden plots so that our neighbors won’t just be given a meal, but can learn how, and be given the opportunity, to grow their own healthy food. Plans are on the table for some type of recreational field and community youth sports program, and who knows what else God will lead us to do with the campus we have been blessed with.



Building and  
Grounds:  
\$75,659  
42.32%

Building & Grounds



We equip and maintain our building and grounds to serve a number of ministries:

- |                            |                                 |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Sunday Worship             | Conference Apportionment        |
| Small Groups               | Ministry Administrative Support |
| Community Needs            | Disaster Relief Shelter         |
| Music Ministry             | Youth Ministry                  |
| Family Counseling Ministry | DUI Counseling                  |
| Celebrate Recovery         | Future 3rd Place Ministries     |
| Grace’s Table              | Spiritual Formation             |
| Cub Scouts Pack 142        | Future Health & Wellness Min.   |
| Relay for Life             | Community Gardens               |
| Operation Christmas Child  | Special Events                  |
| Administrative Meetings    | Community Events                |



# Making Spiritual Growth count...



"Grace is a praying congregation..."

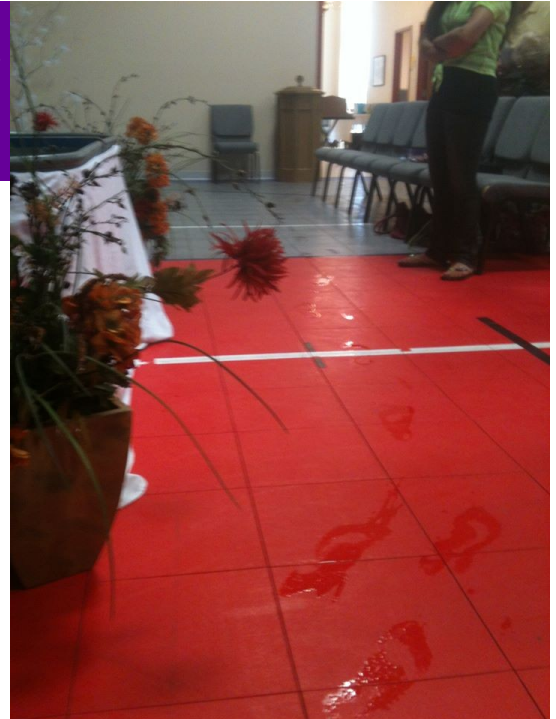
Prayer is an integral part of the life of Grace Church. This church was founded on prayer, built on prayer, and continues to be resourced by prayer. Everything we do is bathed in prayer, and nothing is done without being prayed over first. Our prayer team really is a major part of the strength of Grace Church, and vital to its DNA. Our prayer ministry is key to our spiritual growth as we realize we can only grow by study and communicating with the Divine.

"The sinless One took on the face of a sinner so that we sinners could take on the face of a saint."  
— Max Lucado

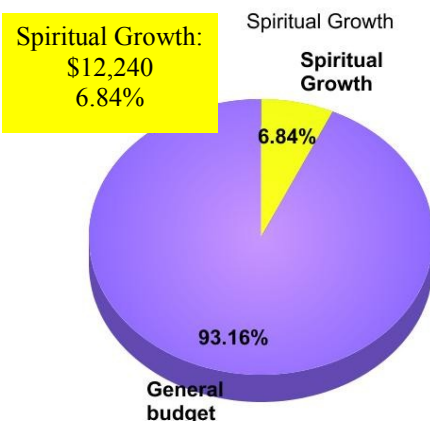
At Grace, we're not as interested in making members as we are in making disciples. Our hope is that everyone who is a part of the Grace family will find their way to a small group for study, mutual edification, and pastoral care.

Through confirmation, small group studies, special church wide study opportunities, and future themed retreats, we are taking steps daily into the deeper waters of our faith.

We believe that every area of life at Grace can become an opportunity for spiritual growth.



Wet footprints leading from the water of baptism, out the door into the world...



## To Grow Spiritually, We Need...

- Pastoral, staff, and volunteer leadership
- Small Group Curriculum
- Nursery and childcare
- Pastoral care and counseling
- Addictions and family counseling
- Mentoring ministry
- Stewardship
- Classroom resources
- Audio/Video capabilities
- Ministry administrative support



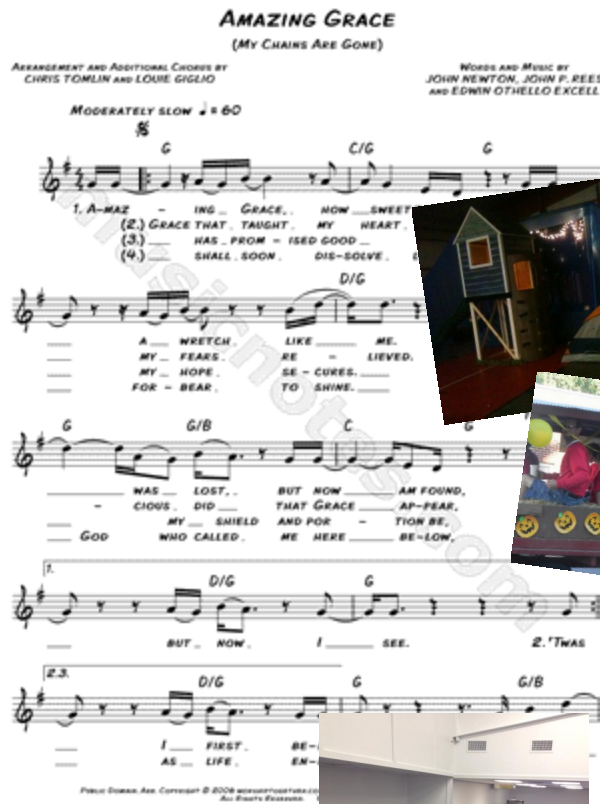


# Make Life count...

"My story started the day I was born, and continues to this day.

I am a completely changed person because I am God's servant, a member of Grace, and because of the love and support of many ministries. My story is a long one, but one that will change lives. I'm far from perfect, but I've changed so many aspects of my life for the better so that I can be an example! I'm actually writing a book about my life and pray that it touches lives. I would not be who I am today without God, my Grace Church family, and its many ministries."

- Cass



Preach the gospel at all times. Use words when necessary.

—St. Francis of Assisi

"Thank you, Lord, for giving me your forgiveness every day..."

Growing up, I hadn't always made the smartest choices. With that being said, my life was in a very dark place for a very long time...

I had moved back to Kentucky, scared to death to start over, but what I didn't know was that this had been God's plan for me all along. A couple months after moving here I had gotten into trouble with a DUI....

I was here in Kentucky with no friends, no family, no job and now a lot of trouble...

I had gotten my license back and was trying to live my life in a way I didn't realize was that I wasn't fully living a free life! That was until I walked into a local business run by a family that was a family of God. Talking to them about God had really made me want to change my life. They asked me if I had ever been saved, and if I hadn't, would I want to be. That day I accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior! That day is the day my life changed forever! I was no longer trying to live my life and make decisions on my own. I was letting God guide me on the path he had chosen for me, and it was the best decision I have ever made. Walking with God is a hard road but it has been the best road I have decided to take! After traveling this road for some time, I decided that it was time to further my walk with God. After making the decision I was ready to cleanse myself of my past so I could take a much higher road with God. I was baptized at Grace Church and that day was the beginning of a brand new life! Coming out of that water, knowing that I had been forgiven, washed clean of my sins, and given a second chance made me feel pure and amazing! I finally know, by the grace of God what it's like to be free!

- Hannah Ruth

"Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do a little."

- Edmund Burke





# Make Life count...

## REDEEMED -

Benji Cowart and Michael Weaver

A A Esus A/D  
 Seems like all I could see was the struggle  
 A A Esus A/D  
 Haunted by ghosts that lived in my past  
 A A/E Esus A/D  
 Bound up in shackles of all my failures  
 A A/E Esus A/D  
 Wondering how long is this gonna last  
 F#m7 A/E A A/D  
 Then You look at this prisoner and say to me  
 "son  
 F#m7 A A A/D D  
 Stop fighting a fight it's already been won"

(Chorus)

A Esus A/D  
 I am redeemed, You set me free  
 A  
 So I'll shake off these heavy chains  
 A/E Esus F#m7 Esus A/D  
 Wipe away every stain, now I'm not who I used  
 to be (to bridge)  
 A A/E Esus A/D  
 I am redeemed

Leadership Team  
 Lay Life Committee  
 Worship Team  
 Gardeners  
 Trustees/Building & Grounds  
 Praise Team  
 Vacation Bible School team  
 Small Group Leaders  
 Children's Church Leaders  
 Worship Leaders  
 Ushers & Greeters

Outreach & Visitation team  
 Christmas Float  
 Youth Leaders  
 Lay Leaders Team  
 Prayer Team  
 Celebrate Recovery Team  
 United Methodist Women

*"I am only one, but still I am one.  
 I cannot do everything,  
 but still I can do something;  
 and because I cannot do everything,  
 I will not refuse to do something  
 that I can do."*

~ Helen Keller

Finance Team  
 Operation Christmas Child  
 Senior Ministry  
 Counseling Ministry  
 Grace's Table Team  
 Missions Team  
 United Methodist Men



From two congregations who nearly 10 years ago realized that their futures were in jeopardy without a major leap of faith, to a corn field 5 years ago, to a place where lives are being changed today...that's what God has done for the people of Grace Church. The question we have to answer now is, "What are we going to do in return?"

The answer is, "We will continue to connect people to Christ and to each other. We will help them discover who they are as forgiven and redeemed children of the Almighty...we will continue to equip them for the ministry God has called them to...we will connect them with others who have been called to a similar path...and then we will send them into a hurting world to be Christ's representatives in Ballard County and beyond."

What will it look like? 5 years from now? 10 years from now? The truth is, we don't really know. We have plans for 2014, and beyond, but it won't be until years from now, when others look back, that the path God has led this church, his people, and our vision to connect the people of this community to each other and to the God who created them will continue to unfold. We know that we want to leave a legacy, and we know that we want to make life count. It all continues with us.

Psalm 32:8

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you.