

## **Lead Pastor's Year-End Report – 2022**

Sisters and brothers in Christ, Thank you. I am so grateful for past year at Grace. So many of you have played a pivotal role with leadership, service, volunteering, and participation. How could church be so meaningful if it weren't for the many parts of the body working together? Thank you all for your involvement and what you bring to this wonderful community we call home.

In the last year we have covered the following teaching topics; Knowing God (Know), Prayer (Grow), B.L.E.S.S. Intentional Evangelism (Go), Hebrews, Why We Church, and the book of 1 John. What a year! We have covered lots of ground on Sundays and I hope it has been encouraging and insightful to your spiritual journey. It may be a good idea to revisit some of the topics from your year in the coming weeks and remind yourself of the things that stood out to you.

We have also had a wonderful number of events, special services, and new initiatives to celebrate as well. With our teaching on Knowing God, we distributed the book by A.W. Tozer, 'Knowledge Of The Holy' to partner with the series. For Lent, we had a daily prayer calendar we engaged in together as a community. We continued with many other events, Bible studies, and gatherings as well. Perhaps the biggest event of the year was our weekly community nights that are just wrapping up now as I write this report. What a blessing this time has been to get together weekly for a meal and Bible study.

Where do we go from here? In the coming year we are excited to continue many of these exciting events and opportunities. We are planning more special services, more midweek events and gathering times, and more opportunities to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. Which, after all, is our goal. We are all working towards the shared goal of being more like Jesus every day, amen?

On a personal note, my family and I also say thank you. It has been over a year now in Tucson and we all love it. Our kids are adjusting well to life and our son Berg refuses to wear shorts unless it is over 100 degrees. We are feeling more comfortable at home and in day-to-day life around town. In the summer we love to swim as often as possible. We love hiking in Catalina State Park and the Tortolita mountains. Berg and Lina also love to visit the zoo or desert museum as often as possible. Life is good in the desert.

So again, thank you to all our volunteers, leaders, staff who made all this possible. It has been a remarkable year at Grace Community Covenant Church. As a reminder, I am always available with any questions or concerns you may have. Please reach out to me at [sam@gracetucson.org](mailto:sam@gracetucson.org) or [office@gracetucson.org](mailto:office@gracetucson.org) to set up a meeting sometime. May the Lord bless you and keep you as we enter another great year together.

In Him,

Rev. Sam E. Gyorfí

## **Connections Director Year-End Report – 2022**

**Sue Montanez**

### **2022 Highlights**

Wow! So many new people have started to call Grace their home! Some stats follow:

- Approximately 140 new visitors came to Grace in 2022! Not all filled out Hello Cards, but we watch out for them from week to week. Here's the rundown:
  - We had about 105 new adults (singles or couples) visit us. Of those 32 have stayed...amounting to a 30% retention rate.
  - We had 14 new families visit, with 10-12 who have stayed...amounting to over 70% retention rate! (New families range from 1-3 kids on average.)
- 63 people took our Heartbeat class in 2022, with 31 deciding to become new Grace members (at the time of this report, there are a few additional people who may yet take the plunge!). We offered Heartbeat four times in 2022.

To try to communicate ways for people to connect into Grace, here are a few stats:

- Issued 75 emails to all 664 of our contacts in Flocknote. Issued another 10 emails to targeted groups
- Posted ~75 Facebook and Instagram posts, including a few boosted posts for our Trunk-or-Treat event. We also took advantage of promoting Grace events on Family Life Radio, 9News, and Tucsonotopia platforms for wider dissemination.
- Coordinated and held two Ministry Fairs.

### **Goals & Prayer Requests for 2023.**

- Improve the current Connections process, simplifying where possible. Better define and improve the use of our Realm tool.
- Build a Connections team.
- Further integrate Connections with our Guest Service and Ushering ministries.

## **Children's Ministry Year-End Report – 2022**

**Melanie Irwin and Lucy Hill**

Dear Grace,

It's been an interesting year in children's ministry from our Easter Scavenger Hunt, to our Monumental post-Covid VBS, to a new school year that finally feels a bit normal. We have been delighted to serve old and new families along the way. This fall we have served GAP Ministry foster families by hosting foster parents and children at Grace on different occasions. This is a ministry we hope to continue. We've also been blessed to serve our Grace congregation on Wednesday night Community Nights with the help of recruited volunteers from our midst. They have been a blessing, and we hope to find even more people who enjoy serving children and families to join in the fun of Children's Ministry.

As our ministry grows, we would appreciate prayers that the surrounding neighbors in this

community would find a place to call home here at Grace. It's been encouraging and exciting to see families plugging in, and we would love to continue to build.

Thank you for your support, prayers, and love.

Melanie and Lucy

### **Worship and Music Ministry Year-End Report - 2022**

While 2021 was a year of beginnings, transitions and change, 2022 brought the return of some familiar traditions as well as the introduction of new traditions. 2022 reminded us of the certainty of change and the unmistakable evidence of God's faithfulness. At last - it seems we have arrived at a new normal at Grace. We saw COVID fall from the headlines and rediscovered the joy that comes from praising and worshiping together as God's people. There is something very special in that togetherness with God at the center.

The sanctuary looks a little different as we installed a pony-wall along the front of the chancel to hide much of the wiring and equipment on the stage. This work was completed by Earl Moyer, Charlie Lahardy, and Charlie Lahardy II. By year-end we will have replaced the oak communion table with two taller tables that will be more versatile and more visible to the congregation in the sanctuary and online.

Our worship team has grown beyond pre-pandemic membership. Our tech team consists of 6-8 individuals who rotate weekly, so that we have three people in the booth on a given Sunday. Our musicians number 15-18 with 5-8 participating in front on a given Sunday. Volunteers regularly give time preparing slides for worship, including the addition of a weekly Call to Worship. We've also added a children's message every-other week.

Of note is the continuation of special times of worship - including a few new/unique pieces. In previous years, Ash Wednesday was not a community worship time - but an experiential, selfpaced time of worship and reflection. This year was more similar to other evening worship times with music, candles, a reflective message, as well as the imposition of ashes. Maundy Thursday included an artist painting throughout the service and our Blue Christmas service was participatory with prayer and candles. In March, the women of the worship team lead music at and enjoyed the women's retreat, while the men stayed home and lead worship at Grace.

As has become the tradition, the band played in the Beach House during the Fall Festival (drivethrough). We play many of our up-tempo worship songs so that community members driving through will get a taste of our music style while enjoying this community event.

Budget money was set aside, this year, for leadership development; so the instrumentalists who participate in weekly leadership went on a working/growing retreat to Mt. Lemmon in the Fall. This was a time to work on new music, strengthen our

fellowship, and dive into a deeper understanding of the impact of the music we offer in worship.

The worship team at Grace would not exist without the many volunteers who give their hearts, time, and skill to the single goal of worship. They are patient and flexible and offer tremendous grace to me and to one another. I am ever aware that I am surrounded by the very best of us - talented, dedicated, encouraging, followers of Jesus who love worship. We are all so very blessed.

Respectfully submitted,

Janette Henson  
Worship Director

### **Office Administrator Year-End Report - 2022**

The morning of Saturday January 2nd I purchased a new day planner for the upcoming year and on the first page I wrote the following note: "God, with your help, I am going to make this the best year of my life! God willing, 2022 is going to be an amazing year."

On Thursday January 6th I received a call from Tracye Jones, the office administrator at the time. She told me she was moving on from Grace and asked if I would fill in temporarily. I said, ABSOLUTELY! When I got off the phone with Tracye, I looked up, smiled, and said 'thank you Lord!' I knew then God had a plan for me. Over the next few months, I answered the phone, replied to emails, scheduled events, and just tried to keep the boat afloat. I knew I could do the job, but I had no idea how much I would enjoy it. Every day I met new people and made new friends. I began building relationships that I never knew were possible. After a few short weeks I knew this is where I wanted to be, and I knew this was God's plan.

I love everything about working here at Grace, but the number one benefit is being able to pursue my spiritual journey every day. The role I am most proud of is being the face of our Benevolence Team. Paul Shedlock is the leader of the Benevolence team and has a passion for helping people and his passion has rubbed off on me. When someone walks into the church in need of help, I immediately drop everything I'm doing and give them my absolute attention. Sitting and listening to someone who is in need and then being able to provide them with immediate relief for food, medicine, gas, etc., is an amazing service we offer here at Grace. Before they leave, I say a prayer with them and my hope is they leave Grace with more faith than they came with, knowing God is with them.

Everyone has heard the saying, if you like what you do, you will never work a day in your life. This is the first time in my life I can say it's 100% true. Being the Office Administrator here at Grace is not a job, it's a family. I get to come to Grace every day and do a job I love, while being surrounded by people I love. It doesn't get any better than that.

The year is not over yet, but I can say with confidence, 2022 has been the best year of my life. I am blessed to call Grace Community Covenant Church my home! In 2023 I am committed to serving the Church, all our amazing ministries, and of course, each member and attendee.

James Marvin