

# GRACE

— S T O R Y —

VOL.41, ISSUE 1 / SPRING 2021

## Where Grace Will Gather

Renovation and expansion plans are underway for Alpha Dining Commons. Look inside to discover all the new designs and features and a special invitation to get involved.

## HEARTH

Grace is a place where students come face to face with God's grace in deep and lasting ways. It's where they discover their calling and gain confidence in their discipline. It's also regarded by thousands of our students and alumni as their second home.

Each of these aspects is important to me as an administrator. I always want us to innovate and lead educationally to prepare students for their future career, but the idea of hosting our students in such a way that they would encounter the grace of God in new ways and regard Grace as a true "homecoming" is quite special. Debbie and I had this experience as students as well.

Alumni tell me they fondly recall a place where they had the ear of a trustworthy faculty member or persistent coach who disciplined them. A place where they discovered a community of peers or teammates who pursued and accepted them. A place where they made lasting memories and marked defining moments together. A safe place to become and to believe.



**At the heart of most homes is the kitchen.** It's the inner sanctum and family crossroads where the household, or in this case, an entire campus, convenes and converses over a meal. Alpha Dining Commons has been that place at the heart of our campus for over 50 years. And it's time for the first complete renovation and expansion of this iconic space.

As part of the renovation, I'm excited that Alpha will gain a large fireplace and hearth, designed to be a visual symbol of this "campus kitchen," not only optimizing food service for a growing student body, but becoming a radiant centerpiece. What do I mean by that?

Historically, a hearth was the source of heat, light and nourishment. Everything radiated out from that center, filling the whole house. Amazing smells permeated the eaves, and laughter, warmth and light delighted all who gathered there. Long before HULU and Netflix, the hearth was also the family entertainment center where families and friends sang songs, told stories and prayed for one another. We envision our new dining commons as a space that embodies these things, reminiscent of the warmth of home as well as a profound reminder of the powerful fire and provision of our God.

In this issue of *Grace Story*, we've creatively used anagrams of the word "hearth" to introduce each article. You'll enjoy reading about the "art" of Mitchell Bowen — an entrepreneurial senior and art student who started his own business based on his illustrations featuring Winona Lake. You'll learn about our award-winning landscaping crew led by Jeff Buriff (BS 93) under the heading of "earth." Prepare yourself for an inspiring and sobering "heart" story of foster and adoptive parents Darren (BA 97) and Stacey (Jackson BS 97) Gagnon, who exemplify the shepherding heart of Jesus in incredible ways. And finally gather around the idea of "hearth" as we unveil more details about Alpha Dining's forthcoming face-lift.

In all of it, be reminded of a place we all call Grace, a Savior we all call Jesus and a place we all call home.



*Bill Katip*

William J. Katip, Ph.D. (BA 74)  
President

**Dr. Bill (BA 74) and Mrs. Debbie (Cahill BA 74) Katip  
in the Alpha Hall lobby in 1974.**



# inside

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## Come to the Table

Feast your eyes on the new plans to renovate and expand Alpha Dining. The heartbeat of campus, where students find nourishment for their bodies, minds and souls, will undergo a floor-to-ceiling face-lift this summer, with expanded and varied seating areas, new serving stations and more.

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## Where Grace Became Golden

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## The American Dream (Crushers)

Darren (BA 97) and Stacey (Jackson BS 97) Gagnon's mantra, "Room for one more," has led them to foster over 30 children, many with special medical and physical needs. Read how following the heart of God has grown their family of four to nine through domestic and international adoption.

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## Full-Service Shop

The campus grounds and sports fields at Grace are diligently maintained and improved by Jeff Buriff (BS 93) and his groundskeeping team. Read about their newest beautification project and why they view their work as way to further the mission of Grace.





# GRACE STORY

## Institutional Mission

Grace is an evangelical Christian community of higher education which applies biblical values in strengthening character, sharpening competence and preparing for service.

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## On The Cover

Alpha Dining Commons will undergo a major renovation and expansion this summer. Pictured is a rendering of the new lobby students will enter before passing into the dining area. The lobby feature a fireplace and plenty of gathering and work spaces.

Comments may be sent to [gracestory@grace.edu](mailto:gracestory@grace.edu).

Opinions expressed by individuals in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of Grace College & Seminary.

Grace College & Seminary reserves the right to edit alum note submissions.

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## ALPHA DINING EXPANSION + RENOVATION



THE NEWEST PLACE  
**WHERE GRACE  
WILL GATHER**

Renderings courtesy of Sodexo - Fanning/Howey





1

The new outdoor patio space, which will serve 25-30 students, will provide students a place to enjoy meals during the warmer months. The patio sits just on the other side of the newly added 1,000-square-foot addition, which will provide a grand entrance where students can gather to meet, study and relax.



# August 20, 1964

On Aug. 20, 1964, Alpha Hall and Dining Commons was dedicated as the first residence hall and dining area on Grace's campus. Alpha was just the fourth building on campus, following McClain Hall in 1951 and Philathea Hall and the Lancer Gym in 1958. It would be two more years before the birth of Beta Hall in 1966.

Authors Dr. Terry White (BME 64) and the late Professor Emeritus R. Wayne Snider (BDiv 53, ThM 55) describe Alpha's beginnings in their book, "25 Years of God's Grace, A History of Grace College's First Quarter Century."

They write that a decade before Alpha was built, many of the women who attended Grace were living at the Westminster Hotel where room and board was \$15 a week. The men lived at McKee Courts motel, and everyone gathered at the large public dining room in Westminster for meals, which were served family style.

As enrollment at Grace grew steadily, the students began to occupy more and more of the Westminster Hotel dining room space, leaving little room for other hotel guests. So in 1962, Grace developed plans for a dormitory and dining commons on campus. The cost of the building totaled \$800,000 — \$650,000 was secured through loans, and \$150,000 was raised in gifts.

Alpha officially opened on Feb. 8, 1964, and the dining facility served its first meal six days later — a Valentine's Day banquet.

The dining commons occupied the first floor of Alpha and the next two floors housed women. In August 1964, the fourth floor was opened for men. Alpha housed 220 students, who were delighted by en suite bathrooms between every two rooms, a lounge to gather in and their very own mailboxes. Just a few months later, in December 1963, the "Victory Bell," now commonly known as the "Alpha Bell," would be relocated from the entrance of the Lancer Gym to its location outside of Alpha — ringing in news of athletic wins and new engagements.

Over the last 57 years, in many ways, Alpha Dining has been the heart of the campus — as so many kitchens are the heart of the home. Alpha is the place where students come around a table and find sustenance, not just for their bodies, but for their minds and souls. They meet with study groups and professors and coaches and Growth Group leaders. Students form lifelong relationships over good food and great fellowship and find reprieve from the stressors of college life through laughter and prayer.

We've remodeled our "kitchen" over the years. There was an expansion in the early 80s; in 1996, "self-serve" dining was introduced; in 2002, Sodexo became Grace's dining partner and introduced eating stations; and in 2012, Alpha Dining underwent a small renovation to increase seating capacity and meeting rooms.



## WESTMINSTER DINING ROOM

RALPH TUCKER

"The Chef who knows how to please"



2

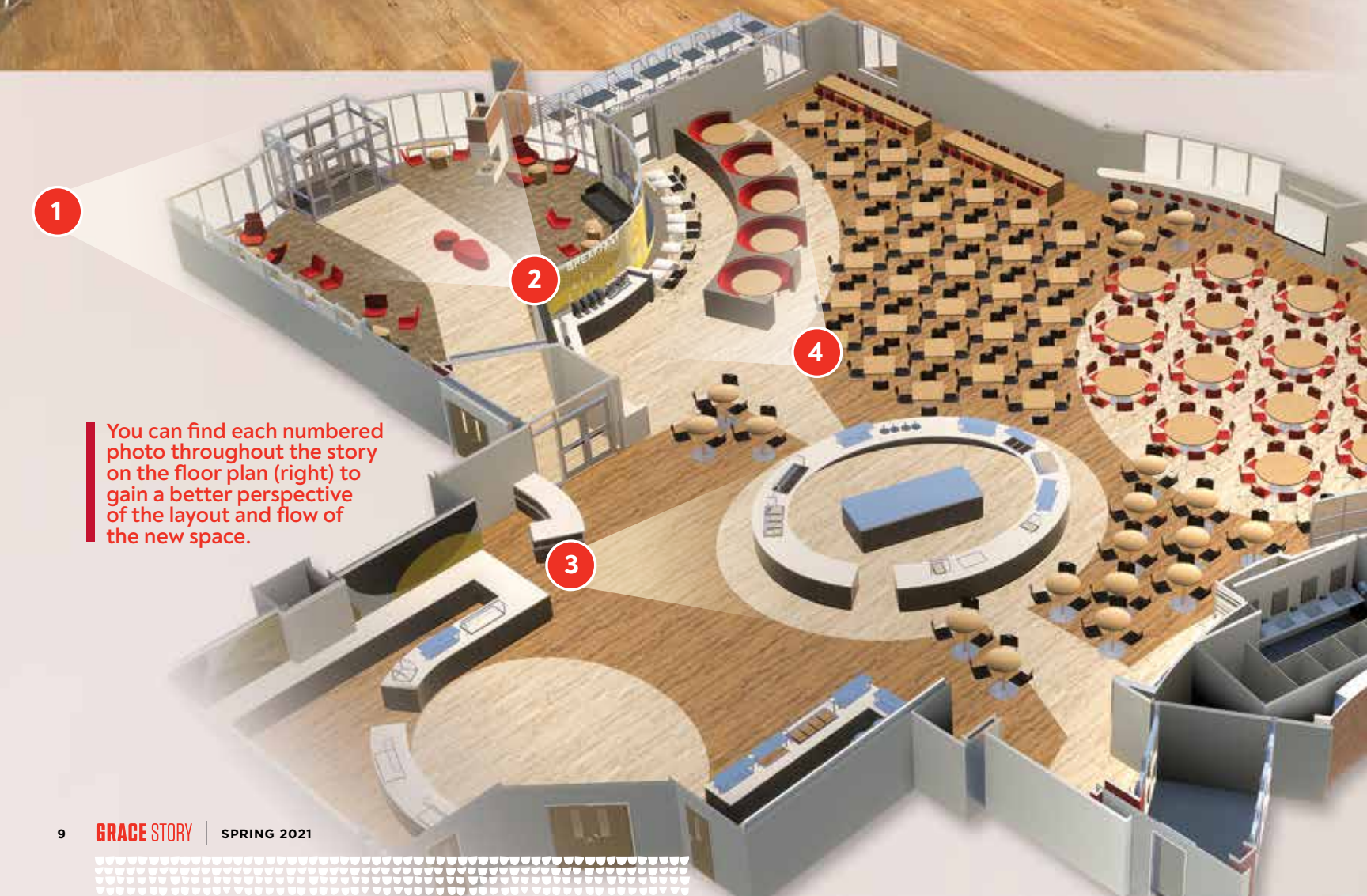
Just inside the new entrance, before entering into the dining area, students will find plenty of space in the new 1,000-square-foot lobby to fellowship and study, whether it's around the fireplace or at the numerous seating and work areas throughout the space.





3

When students pass through the lobby and enter the dining facility, they will encounter an entirely new aesthetic, complete with all new furnishings, dining stations and equipment.



1

2

4

3

You can find each numbered photo throughout the story on the floor plan (right) to gain a better perspective of the layout and flow of the new space.

Because Alpha Dining nourishes our student body in so many invaluable ways, when developing our last five-year plan, the Grace Board of Trustees included a renovation to address Alpha Dining's dated look, improve its service capacity and offer more dietary-friendly food options.

In March 2017, when Grace launched the \$37 million ASPIRE Campaign, we hoped to fund a variety of projects and programs designed to continue Grace's efforts to be an exemplary Christ-centered educational community. One of the objectives of the campaign was to give students more places to gather together in fellowship.

"We want to make more space in Alpha Dining for the conversations and relationships that shape students' minds and hearts," says Aaron Crabtree (BA 95), associate vice president and dean of student affairs. "We want to improve the service students receive, so that their dietary needs are met and elevate the atmosphere, so that our students feel as comfortable in the space as they would if they were at home in their own kitchens."



4 The newly remodeled dining room will include a variety of new seating options including booths, tables that can be joined together for large groups and high-top tables.



Because of generous donations to the ASPIRE Campaign and additional donations which Grace has received in the last year, we are pleased to announce our plans to renovate Alpha Dining.

The cost of the renovation, which includes money set aside for future maintenance, totals \$5.5 million. Through ASPIRE, and the generosity of donors since, \$5.1 million has been secured to date. Construction will begin in the late spring and Alpha Dining will be ready for students when they return in the fall. The renovation will include a floor-to-ceiling overhaul, additional seating, added dining stations and expanded kitchen space.

Students will still be able to find their favorite food options but the equipment, design and flow will all be upgraded. Additionally, there will be a new food station, "Simple Servings," that will provide

daily options that are allergen free and address a variety of dietary restrictions. The redesigned space will also increase capacity from 360 people to 420 and create a more efficient layout so students are able to be served more quickly. In the warmer months, students will be able to enjoy eating outdoors in the new patio space, which will seat 25-30 students.

"If there is one thing that has become undeniable to me in the last year, it's that we are designed to be together," says President Dr. Bill Katip (BA 74). "We are better when we're together, sharing one another's burdens, rejoicing when others rejoice, living in hard-fought unity by the grace of God. This Alpha Dining project underscores our mission to give students a place to come to the table and find belonging in the body of Christ and to be set free to follow Him wherever He leads."



Alpha Dining Project

# COME TO THE TABLE HELP US MEET OUR GOAL

**We invite you to join us in making the Alpha Dining Project a reality.** You can help us reach our \$5.5 million goal by giving online at [www.grace.edu/alphaproject](http://www.grace.edu/alphaproject) from now through our Day of Giving on April 29, 2021.

**We hope to raise the remaining \$400,000 for the Alpha Dining Project through a \$200,000 matching gift challenge.** Alumni and friends of Grace from each category to the right are providing the \$200,000 dollar-for-dollar match. You can join your particular alumni decade, as a current or former parent, or as a friend of the college.



**REMAINING \$400,000**  
**\$200,000 MATCHING GIFT CHALLENGE**



**Classes of 1937-1969:**  
**\$30K match**

**Classes of 1970-1979:**  
**\$30K match**

**Classes of 1980-1989:**  
**\$30K match**

**Classes of 1990-1999:**  
**\$30K match**

**Classes of 2000-2009:**  
**\$30K match**

**Classes of 2010-Present:**  
**\$10K match**

**Current and Former Parents:**  
**\$20K match**

**Community/Extended  
Grace Family Challenge:**  
**\$20K match**

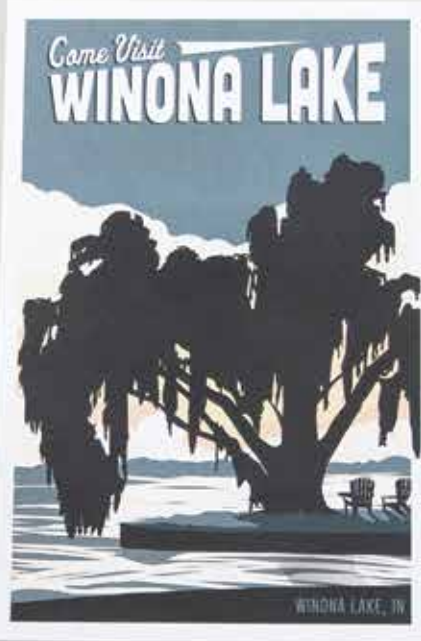
**\$5.5 MILLION GOAL**

Senior art student Mitchell Bowen works on his Winona Lake poster designs, which launched his small business Bowen Travel Posters.

“THERE WAS NO  
CHANCE IN MY MIND  
THAT I WAS GOING  
TO GO [TO GRACE].”

— MITCHELL BOWEN

# WHERE GRACE BECAME GOLDEN



Mitchell Bowen's hometown, Golden, Colorado, sits on the edge of the Rocky Mountain foothills. It boasts 300 days of annual sunshine and endless camping, hiking and river canyon fly-fishing adventures.

Bowen fondly recounts the numerous outdoor activities that colored his childhood, including learning to ski when he was just three and taking an epic 30-day RV road trip with his family of seven to Canada.

Attending a college in the Midwest, let alone rural northern Indiana, wasn't even a consideration. But his picture-postcard life in Golden was about to find its match in Winona Lake.

When Bowen wasn't on an outdoor adventure, he spent his time drawing. "I loved art. It's all I did for hours of the day," he remembers. When he started looking at colleges to attend, one of the state schools in Colorado was at the top of the list. It offered the graphic design program Bowen wanted and the fun he hoped to have too. "It's known for being a place where you go to class and then ski the rest of the day," says Bowen with a sheepish laugh.

Even though his parents rarely forced him into a decision, Bowen's mom wanted him to consider one of the 180 CCCU (Council for Christian Colleges & Universities) institutions across the nation. As an employee at Colorado Christian University, she hoped Bowen might be able to pursue art while also benefiting from a community centered on Christ; she discovered Grace offered both graphic design and illustration.

"I had zero interest," says Bowen. "There was no chance in my mind that I was going to go there.

I did not want to go to the Midwest, and I had this idea that Christian schools were super legalistic and the people were kind of strange." Bowen quickly apologizes, "I feel so bad saying that now!"

Additionally, Bowen didn't know if the art program at a Christian school would allow him to grow and develop in an atmosphere of creative freedom. Nonetheless, he applied to Grace and even got a scholarship, but his mind remained unchanged.

To Bowen's surprise, his mom bought them tickets to go visit Grace. "I was a little bothered," says Bowen. Just as he imagined, they arrived at Grace on a less-than-Golden day. It was cold and gloomy, confirming one of Bowen's many reasons for avoiding the Midwest. He expected the rest of his assumptions to be proved in short order.

Before the day was over, God upended every one of Bowen's concerns.

Bowen and a group of other prospective students began their day by hearing from a panel of Grace students who exuded a genuineness that captivated Bowen. From there Bowen walked to chapel where students introduced themselves along the way and made an effort to get to know him. "At chapel, the worship team sang 'It Is Well with My Soul.' As I was there and looking around, the students were actually really worshipping, and in that moment, the song broke me down a little," recalls Bowen.

Bowen had accepted Jesus as his savior when he was young, and in fifth grade, he remembers really surrendering his life to God. But during high school, Bowen began making decisions that drew him away from God.

As the chorus played, Bowen remembers acknowledging his waywardness. “I was not pursuing Christ fully with my life. I knew the only way it would be well with my soul is if I had Christ — nothing else would do it.” As he stood in chapel, he renewed his commitment to Christ.

“Then and there I talked to God in a true way that I hadn’t done in a while. I knew I wanted to be with Christ more than anything. And I knew I had been following my own agenda.” In that moment, Bowen felt like that meant going to Grace. “But I told God He still needed to do some more convincing.”

After chapel, Bowen headed off to lunch where one of the guys he sat down next to called out to the table, “Hey, have we prayed yet?” Among his friends at home, it felt like Bowen was always the one who had to initiate prayer. In that small moment, Bowen saw the heart of Grace: to pursue Christ and to invite others to do the same.

Finally, Bowen attended an art history class taught by Chair of the Department of Visual, Performing and Media Arts Kim Reiff. She invited Bowen to stay afterwards, and they spent the next three hours discussing the art program. “She dispelled every one of my doubts about an art program at a Christian school,” says Bowen. “Her program would allow me to pursue what I wanted to do as an artist and give me creative freedom.”

At his hotel room that night, Bowen spent time reflecting and praying. “That night, I knew I was going to Grace. Without a doubt.”

Bowen arrived on campus in the fall of 2018, and not only will he graduate in three years this May with a degree in Visual Communication Design and an Illustration minor, but also with his own new small business, Bowen Travel Poster Designs Ltd.

For his Advanced Illustration class (fall 2020), Reiff tasked students to create an illustrated publication for their final project. Bowen knew exactly what he wanted to do. The summer before, he’d hatched a dream of creating postcards and posters for small towns that showcased their unique features.

He wanted to model his art after a specific style inspired by the posters made during the Great Depression by the WPA (Works Project Administration), featuring Modernist typography, bold graphics and a limited color palette.

Bowen turned to Winona Lake as his muse, interviewing community members about the places they loved most, photographing those places and sketching out designs on his iPad Air.



The art department along with a local printer provided each student with \$100 to print their work. Bowen took his series of printed postcards and posters and went down to the Village of Winona where he had four local businesses commit to buying his inventory.



Since then, his business has grown substantially, and he has fulfilled numerous order requests from the Winona Lake businesses. Additionally, Bowen has since created a series of postcards and posters for his hometown, Golden, Colorado, and for Yellow Springs, Ohio, where his girlfriend lives.

“Grace has been such an amazing experience for me in so many ways,” says Bowen who is quick to cite numerous faculty members who have been instrumental in developing and refining his skills as an artist, including Cynthia Bryan, instructor of art integrations and ceramics, and Aaron Winey, instructor of visual communication design. Bowen is emphatic that Bryan can teach anyone how to draw. “She teaches in a way anyone can understand, giving us the technical skills and so much encouragement along the way.” He credits Winey with giving him one of his most valuable perspectives: “He taught me not to take the path of least resistance in creativity. He wants us to do the work of researching, brainstorming and sketching *before* creating the final product so that the end result is powerful.”

Additionally, Bowen says, “The staff have helped me figure out misconceptions I’ve had about my relationship with Christ. And the community at Grace has given me a sense of what it’s like to walk constantly in truth and worship. I want to carry that constancy throughout the rest of my life.”

After graduation, Bowen plans on traveling around the country, visiting small towns, and creating specialized illustrations that local businesses can sell. “Making posters — I love it, and I’m so thankful I enjoy it, but I think God has something more. This might be my tent-making that provides me with the resources I need to address a burden to help really hurting people.”

YOU CAN FIND AND PURCHASE BOWEN'S ARTWORK ON INSTAGRAM @BOWEN\_TRAVELPOSTERS OR REACH HIM BY EMAIL AT MITCHELLBOWEN@GMAIL.COM.

“GRACE HAS BEEN SUCH AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE FOR ME IN SO MANY WAYS.”

Hear the voices of Grace alumni, faculty, staff, students and special guests who are coaching, exhorting and equipping the Grace community.



## Episodes: \_\_\_\_\_

- E43:** **Dr. Kimberley Kroll** (MDiv 14), 2020 Seminary Young Alumni of the Year winner
- E44:** Engineering Roundtable featuring **Dr. Fred Wentorf**, chair of the Department of Engineering; **Pavle Popovic**, engineering student; and **Jody Claypool**, principal consultant at JC Innovations LLC
- E45:** **Joshua Hanlon** (BA 17), founder and host of Beyond the Brick, the world's only LEGO builder interview show
- E46:** **Mitchell Bowen**, art student and entrepreneur (Find his story on Page 13.)
- E47:** **Christy Walters**, exercise science program director
- E48:** **Andre Stone**, student body president

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# DOUBLE YOUR GIFT



\$200,000 in matching gifts available! Invest in the Christ-centered community at Grace College by supporting the Alpha Dining Project.

[WWW.GRACE.EDU/ALPHAPROJECT](http://WWW.GRACE.EDU/ALPHAPROJECT)

BY KERITH ACKLEY-JELINEK

# *The* American Dream

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CRUSHERS

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*Darren (BA 97) and Stacey (Jackson BS 97) Gagnon were living in Camp Verde, a little town in central Arizona, with two kids and blossoming professional careers. It was a good life, a sensible life — an American Dream life.*



**But God had more in store.** The Gagnons began obeying His promptings and following Him into difficult places, where their sacrificial decisions often look foolish. It is a hard life, a beautiful life — an abundant life.

They are self-described  
**American Dream Crushers.**

## **SURRENDERING TO GRACE**

Darren and Stacey began dating their freshman year at a community college in their home state of Arizona. They'd never heard of Grace College until Stacey's roommate, Rebecca (Wahlstrom BA 97) Macy decided to transfer to Grace. Interested in attending a Christian college, they began exploring ways to attend. Both landed athletic scholarships and set foot on campus for the first time in the fall of 1995.

"It was complete culture shock for me," says Stacey. She was raised by a single mother and cherished her independence. "Grace felt restrictive to me with its rules." Even though Stacey would have said at the time she was a Christian, she remembers the night she actually surrendered her life to Jesus after a confrontation with her volleyball coach, Candace Moats.

"She pulled me aside at the end of the year and said, 'You are walking a line. You need to choose to believe or not, to step over to

one side or the other.' I remember walking by myself that night. I knew I'd been living a complete lie." Stacey made Jesus the Lord of her life at that moment. "As an athlete, my life was about performing. I had sold myself out to my ambition. Grace completely transformed who I was as a person. I'm so thankful [Moats] called me out on the carpet."

## **MAKING MORE ROOM**

Stacey and Darren graduated from Grace in 1997 and moved back to Arizona where they married in 1998 and had two kids by 2003. Stacey remembers thinking, "We have our two kids, we're done. I can concentrate on being a mom and having a career."

One day in 2005, Stacey, who was a school teacher, noticed a new student crying. The student told her he was taken from his home the night before and didn't know what bus to take because he didn't know the woman he was staying with. Stacey's heart was broken. She began doing research into the foster care system and realized one of the basic problems is a shortage of foster care homes.

"We have enough room," thought Stacey. "We can take in a kid." So Darren and Stacey began fostering children that year and quickly became certified to foster "medically fragile" children who require a higher level of care because of special needs.

Over the next decade, the Gagnons would foster over 30 children. Many of them were on feeding tubes or ventilators, undergoing heart surgeries or in extended hospital stays. Stacey eventually left teaching to stay home full time to care for them. "These are children who are emotionally hurting and physically broken, but the healing and beauty that comes from ashes is amazing," insists Stacey. "Kids who should never walk and talk are jabbering and running. We got a front row seat to God's miraculous touch in children's lives."

In 2009 and 2010, the Gagnons adopted three children from the Arizona foster care system, once again believing they were done.

## **A GLOBAL CALLING**

In 2010, Darren was teaching full time and Stacey had begun working part time while they raised their five children and continued to foster. With the cost of living in Arizona and their large family, they needed more income. Stacey went back to school, earned a nursing degree in 2013 and began working in the ICU. Her own experiences caring for children with trauma and extreme medical needs continued to be refined, so when she heard that about 80% of children with disabilities in eastern Europe die within the first five years — and if they don't die are moved into adult institutions — she couldn't believe it.



**The Gagnon family** (from right to left): Darren, Stacey, Bailey (age 19), Silas (age 17), Isaac (age 14), Ellie (age 13), Joel (age 12), Israel (age 9) and Zorey (age 5).

Darren and Stacey began to research the statistics and believed God was calling them to advocate for these children.

“We thought we could convince someone else to travel there and see what’s happening and become part of the solution, but it turns out no one would!” says Stacey. Darren’s solution: “Let’s go ourselves.”

Stacey soon boarded a plane for Bulgaria to meet their little boy. She knew that based on her research, what she would see at the orphanage would be horrendous. “But I’d already seen so much trauma between the medical foster care work and working in the ICU,” recounts Stacey. “I thought, ‘I can handle this.’”

### A HEART AWAKENED

When Stacey arrived at the orphanage, it was a crumbling building that held between 300-400 children and was eerily quiet. When she met her son, Israel, she couldn’t believe her eyes. He was a skeleton with rotting teeth, unable to speak, with spina bifida and autism. All he did was scream.

When she got back to her hotel room, she lay on the floor of the bathroom crying out to God. “There is no way. I can’t do this. This is insane. This child will destroy our lives,” she remembers.

The next day, when she returned to the orphanage, she was taken back to his room. The section of the orphanage where her son was living was labeled “Malformations” and consisted of glass-walled rooms. “It’s completely quiet and sterile,” describes Stacey. “I walk into my son’s room, and he’s tied up in his crib just swaying. I can see other kids in other rooms banging their heads on walls. It’s the most

horrifying thing I’ve ever seen in my entire life.” She was about to see worse. The staff proceeded to take her to what was known as the “dying room.” It was lined with beds and cribs with bodies in active states of dying. “These children are here to die,” she was told.

“I wanted to run screaming from the building,” says Stacey. “That was when God changed my vision for the world. That was the day that I became responsible to act. I knew my life was to be spent getting the word out and being a voice for the voiceless.”

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*The Gagnons were recently featured on “The Today Show” and interviewed by Focus on the Family. “These platforms allow us to be a voice for these children to shine a light on what we don’t want to see. And we hope to nudge the church a little bit.” — Stacey Gagnon*

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### A VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

Darren and Stacey eventually brought Israel home, and Stacey began using her voice to raise awareness through her blog “Ransom for Israel.” They also started the nonprofit, Lost Sparrows, in 2017 which supports families who want to adopt children or who have adopted children and provides training and education to families, educators and health professionals around children with trauma and disabilities.

Israel is now a third grader, attending the local elementary school, talking and writing and thriving. And Darren and Stacey thought they were once again done.

A year after Israel was home, they heard about another child in the same orphanage who was missing her left arm and right leg below the knee. Once again, the Gagnon’s invoked their mantra: “We have room for one more.” It turns out that when Stacey went to pick up Israel, Zorey, their eventual daughter, was four months old, lying right across the hall from Israel. Zorey came home to the Gagnons in 2018. “She’s five now, has a prosthetic leg and can run and jump and do it all!” says Stacey.

Darren and Stacey are brutally honest about how hard fostering and adopting are. Stacey’s blog has gained tens of thousands of followers and brought them national attention because of their transparency.

They were recently featured on “The Today Show” and interviewed by Focus on the Family. “These platforms allow us to be a voice for these children. They allow us to shine a light on what we don’t want to see. And we hope to nudge the church a little bit,” says Stacey.

### A NEW HOME

In 2019, the Gagnons made another unexpected decision. After living most of their lives in Arizona, they picked up their family of seven and moved to Winona Lake, Indiana. They reconnected with the area in 2017 after making a college visit when their oldest daughter was considering attending. “It’d been 20 years since we’d been there, and we weren’t sure what would have changed,” says Darren. “But it was a really tremendous visit, and I felt a lot of peace about her coming.” Upon their return home, Darren mentioned to Stacey how special

he believed Winona Lake was and that it could be a place for them to move to someday. Stacey dismissed it quickly. Their jobs were secure, their families were all in Arizona, they were still fostering children, their nonprofit was growing — not to mention the weather. “I laughed at him. You’re crazy.”

Over the next two years, God made it clear that it was time for them to move. They quit their jobs, bought a house sight unseen in Winona Lake before they had even sold their existing home and moved to Indiana the summer of 2019. Darren quickly found a teaching job for the 2019-20 school year, and Stacey was able to secure remote contract work with a health company in Arizona. And in 2020, the board of Lost Sparrows voted to move Darren into a full-time role with the nonprofit. “God has been incredibly faithful in providing for our family; Lost Sparrows has had one of our best years ever in the middle of a pandemic,” says Darren.

Because of COVID-19, Darren and Stacey haven’t been able to travel internationally, but they’ve hosted more trainings and conferences than ever before by moving things virtual. “We want to continue to support adopting families internationally and in the U.S. while also working to drive policy changes around the world that help first families (biological parents) keep their children,” says Stacey.

### A DREAM REDEFINED

“A lot of us have subscribed to the American Dream,” says Stacey. “Having two kids, the house and secure jobs. That’s what I wanted, but God did not call us to that. I write about hard and real stuff because we have to respond to a higher calling, not to the American Dream. It would be easy grace to paint it happily ever after. It’s not. We do hard things.”

“Let us be clear,” Darren adds. “A lot of people say we couldn’t do what you do. That is not the point. We don’t all have the same abilities. God calls us to different things. It’s about listening to God when He tells us to do something.” Stacey likens it to the conversation her coach had with her. “When she told me I need to choose, that I can’t just walk the line, I have to be all in or all out, that’s the same line a lot of us are walking right now. We aren’t giving ourselves completely over to what God is calling us to because of fear.”

Walking by faith is hard, attest the Gagnons, but there is beauty in following Jesus and witnessing Him do what feels and seems impossible.



For more information or to get involved, visit the Gagnons’ nonprofit site at [www.LostSparrows.org](http://www.LostSparrows.org).

You can find their blog at [www.RansomForIsrael.com](http://www.RansomForIsrael.com) and follow them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ransomforisrael](https://www.facebook.com/ransomforisrael).



*Hear the Gagnons on the Grace Story Podcast (EP:30).*

That Gagnon family eat dinner, work on homework and play games at their home in Winona Lake, Indiana.



ATHLETICS NEWS ON AND OFF THE COURT

# NEUHART NAMED CROSSROADS LEAGUE SID OF THE YEAR



The Crossroads League announced in July 2020 that Grace Assistant Athletic Director and Sports Information Director Josh Neuhart (BS 11) had been named its 2019-2020 Sports Information Director of the Year. The award is the second for Neuhart (2015-2016), who recently completed his tenth year as the SID for the Lancers.

The Director of the Year award was voted on by the 10 sports information directors from the Crossroads League.

"We have a tremendous group of sports information directors in the Crossroads League, so it is humbling to be selected by them for this award," stated Neuhart. "I am incredibly thankful to have such a supportive administration, notably Dr. Bill Katip (BA 74) and Chad Briscoe. It is an honor to share the stories of our student-athletes and point the spotlight on our coaches and programs every day."

Neuhart and his department highlighted their list of accomplishments during the 2019-2020 year by spearheading Grace's publicity efforts for its men's soccer COVID-19 marathon. Coverage for the event extended to Chicago Tribune, ESPN, Runners World and Sports Spectrum, while earning air time in at least 10 segments over various television outlets.

Neuhart was also recognized for his work throughout the 2019-2020 year, by receiving 13 CoSIDA and NAIA-SIDA awards for excellence in writing, social media, graphic design and publications.

"Josh and his staff set a high standard of excellence every day, and this award is a direct reflection of their tremendous work throughout the year," said Athletic Director Chad Briscoe. "Josh is not only an exceptional SID, but he is a true servant leader and an integral part of our athletic administration."

# GRACE ATHLETICS UNVEILS REVAMPED WEBSITE



Grace's athletic department is pleased to announce a new look for its award-winning website ([www.gclancers.com](http://www.gclancers.com)). The new site features intuitive navigation, dynamic imagery and integrated social and video content to better showcase Grace's programs.

The website is fully responsive, allowing users to have a similar viewing experience between desktop, tablet and mobile versions of the site. Additionally, many of Grace's home events will continue to be streamed live for free in HD on the Lancers' website at [www.gclancers.com/live](http://www.gclancers.com/live).

Grace has again partnered with SIDEARM Sports as its website provider. SIDEARM Sports, the nation's leading digital provider for college athletics, has powered Grace's site since 2013.

The Lancers' website has been ranked in the top five of the NAIA for four straight years, the only site in the nation to claim that distinction.

## MEET NATHAN WADLEY, NEW STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING COACH



In 2019, the Grace athletic department welcomed Nate Wadley as the Lancers' next strength and conditioning coach. He is the second strength coach in department history, following Scott Moore (BS 08) who became Grace's men's basketball head coach in 2019.

Wadley works locally at Optimum Performance Sports (OPS), serving

as the director of sports performance. He graduated from Anderson University in 2016 where he was a four-year member of the men's soccer team. He has post-grad experience working in strength and conditioning

at four NCAA Division I universities and was a graduate assistant coach at Ball State for two years where he directed strength and conditioning efforts for women's soccer, swimming and diving. Wadley also served as a volunteer or intern at Notre Dame, Marquette and Western Michigan.

Wadley earned his Strength and Conditioning Coach Certification (SCCC) in 2019. The SCCC is the gold standard for strength and conditioning coaches. The grueling process includes a 640-hour internship, written exam and practical exam in front of a panel.

"I feel very blessed and fortunate to have the opportunity to be part of Grace College's athletic department," Wadley said. "It's an honor to be trusted with the responsibility of improving both the health and performance of each individual athlete, and it has been so rewarding to develop relationships with the coaching staff and the student-athletes."

# GraceWire

NEWS AROUND CAMPUS



Grace names Dr. Laurie Owen (left) vice president of academic affairs and Dr. Cheryl (Bartel BS 92) Bremer (right) dean of the School of Education.

## Owen and Bremer Selected for New Appointments

In January, after serving a year as interim vice president of academic affairs, Dr. Laurie Owen was named the permanent vice president of academic affairs. Owen has accrued nearly 20 years of experience at Grace, including 10 as the dean of the School of Education.

"Laurie has been a beloved and dynamic leader on campus from the day she arrived," said President Dr. Bill Katip (BA 74). "She is a unifying agent at Grace, and her insightful leadership and genuine care for our faculty make her ideal for this role," said Katip.

Owen will continue her oversight of the policies and programs for undergraduate and graduate academics and will serve as the director and coordinator of the work, assessment and development in these areas. "I look forward to building relationships with and learning from faculty members across all disciplines and schools," said Owen. "As I step into this role, one of my chief priorities is to design and implement effective faculty

development opportunities based on our faculty's interests and needs," she said.

To fulfill Owen's role as head of the education faculty, Grace named Dr. Cheryl (Bartel BS 92) Bremer the new dean of the School of Education. Bremer has 13 years of experience as an education professor at Grace and 10 years of experience teaching in public schools. She has been recognized twice as "Outstanding Special Education Professor" at Indiana's CEC Conference and has launched countless special education initiatives on campus including the online intense intervention graduate program.

"A driven and informed leader, Cheryl will effectively take the School of Education to the next level," said Owen. "Cheryl models Christ-like character, professional competence and selfless service, and she will lead future teachers to do the same."

## Education Students Top Exam Scores



For the 2019-20 academic year — and the third year in a row — Grace students earned the highest Indiana CORE Elementary Reading Exam scores of the 30 institutions that reported their results, including Indiana University, Butler University and Taylor University. Grace students

also had the highest average score in the state for Special Education with the Mild Intervention licensure exam with a 100% first attempt pass rate. Three other "top five" exam scores were reported for Grace School of Education: third for Elementary Education Pedagogy, third for Elementary Social Studies and fourth for Elementary Science — beating out schools like the University of Notre Dame and Ball State.

Dr. Cheryl (Bartel BS 92) Bremer, dean of the School of Education, says the strong exam scores reflect the quality professors at Grace who are experts in their field and passionate in training the next generation of

educators, students who are committed to developing the knowledge and skills necessary, and effective and strong partnerships with the local schools.

"Right from the beginning, often the first semester they are on campus, students are immersed in the K-12 classroom," says Bremer. Students will spend between 150-200 hours in schools before they begin their student teaching experience, giving them countless opportunities to apply what they learn in the Grace classroom.

But success on licensure exams is just one aspect of the unique and impactful School of Education program. "We believe teaching is so much more than knowing the content and how to teach it," says Bremer. "Our goal is to develop teachers as moral practitioners who are competent in their knowledge, demonstrate exemplary character and reflect a heart of service both in and out of the classroom. It is based on the mandate in Micah 6:8 to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly — and above all, to look to Jesus as the master teacher."

# Grace Awarded \$2 Million in Grants from Lilly Endowment Inc.

In September 2020, Grace College received a \$1 million implementation grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. as a part of Lilly's "Charting the Future for Indiana's Colleges and Universities" initiative. The initiative is designed to help Indiana's higher education institutions implement strategies that create cost efficiencies and enhance their viability.

Grace is leveraging the grant to create unique program offerings with Purdue University and RIZE, which provides colleges with a course-sharing model that enables them to offer new degree programs more efficiently. Grace is also using the funds to establish a state-of-the-art Center for Sustainable Agriculture on campus.

"We were thrilled to get this news!" said President Dr. Bill Katip (BA 74). "Our initiatives with Purdue, RIZE and the Center for Sustainable Agriculture blend the best of our internal assets — our people and programs — with external partnerships and expertise," said Katip.

Additionally, in December 2020, Grace Theological Seminary received a grant of \$1 million from Lilly Endowment Inc. to establish the Charis Collective for Thriving Leaders.

The project is funded through Lilly Endowment Inc.'s "Thriving in Ministry" initiative, which supports a variety of religious organizations across the nation as they create or strengthen programs that help pastors build relationships with experienced clergy who can serve as mentors.

The Charis Collective (CC) for Thriving Leaders will facilitate mentor-based cohorts, annual events, ongoing training events and academic programs geared toward pastors. Leaders from the CC will participate on an advisory board for the center and lend their expertise as cohort mentors, speakers and contributors. As a result, church planters, small church revitalization pastors and pastors-in-training will develop skills,

competencies and relationships that will equip them for thriving in ministry.

"This is so much more than a grant," said Dr. Freddy Cardoza, dean of Grace Theological Seminary. "We know that if we change the lives of the shepherds, then we change the lives of the sheep. It's an exciting initiative — please pray for it!"

For more information about the Charis Collective for Thriving Leaders, contact Dr. Freddy Cardoza, dean of Grace Theological Seminary, at [freddy.cardoza@grace.edu](mailto:freddy.cardoza@grace.edu).



## Grace Offers New Medical Imaging Degree and Graduate Communication Certificate

Grace College and John Patrick University (JPU) of Health and Applied Sciences in South Bend, Indiana, have partnered to offer Grace students a Bachelor of Science in Medical Imaging. Enrollment in the program, which is accredited by the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology, began this spring. Grace added the degree in response to an increased need for medical imaging technicians in the nation — and specifically in Kosciusko County — to face the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and an aging population.

"Only a handful of Christian colleges and universities in the country are offering medical imaging degrees, and now, Grace College is one of them," said Dr. Joseph Frentzel, chair of the Department of Science and Mathematics at Grace.

The medical imaging program prepares students to take the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (AART) examination and offers students specializations in computed tomography, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), nuclear medicine and sonography.

Grace students will take the Grace College Core liberal arts curriculum and general math and science courses, but the medical imaging-specific courses will be taught by JPU faculty.

Additionally, Grace College and Purdue Online are partnering to offer Grace students an online graduate certificate in corporate communication strategy. Grace students of all majors can now apply to the program, and courses will be made available starting this summer.

Completion of the certificate requires four graduate courses, which students will take during their fourth year at Grace. After graduating, students have the option to apply at Purdue Online to use their 12 earned credits toward the online master's in communication where they will only need six more courses to complete their master's degree. Students may also use these credits to apply to other master's programs.

For more information on the bachelor's in medical imaging, contact Dr. Joe Frentzel at [frentzjw@grace.edu](mailto:frentzjw@grace.edu).

For more information about the corporate communication certificate, contact Dr. Pat Loebs, associate professor of communication, at [ploebs@grace.edu](mailto:ploebs@grace.edu).

EARTH

# FULL-SERVICE SHOP

BY KERITH ACKLEY-JELINEK

Jeff Buriff (GS 93), Grace's head groundskeeper, at the shop on campus.

Jeff Buriff (BS 93) never planned on going to college. He grew up on a farm in Ohio, raising livestock and rebuilding tractors and other farm machinery like LEGOS. He dreamed and assumed one day he'd be working on the family farm and maybe even working for John Deere.

Buriff's dad, however, had different plans. All the money his son had earned raising livestock was off limits unless used toward a college education. Buriff's mom, Marjorie (Moomaw C 69) Buriff and his sister, Melissa (Buriff BS 87) Butler had gone to Grace, so it was at the top of the list.

But Buriff had plans of his own, and hatched a scheme to appease his father. "I figured I'd get into Grace but sabotage it by failing my SATs," recounts Buriff. When he went to sit for the test, Buriff didn't even read a single question. "I just filled in the dots randomly. All I could think about was getting back to the tractor I was working on at the shop." Buriff finished his test in under five minutes and was confident he failed miserably, securing his future as a farmer.

"Turns out God had other plans," laughs Buriff. Miraculously, he managed to get an adequate score and arrived on Grace's campus in the fall of 1988, assuming he'd just attend one year.

But the people at Grace, like Athletic Director Phil Dick (BA 65), whom he looked up to the most, convinced him to stay. "Each year, people invested

in me, and even though I didn't like the school work," admits Buriff, "I loved the people, and they were what I needed."

Buriff ended up graduating and went on to start his own successful landscaping business. "I never lost the desire to farm, but as I learned from my SATs," reflects Buriff, "God has a better plan." Grace often consulted with him for jobs on campus and eventually asked Buriff to consider coming on full time as its grounds supervisor.

**"OUR JOB IS ABOUT SERVANTHOOD.  
TO HELP MAKE GRACE A GREAT  
EXPERIENCE FOR EVERYONE WHO  
VENTURES THROUGHOUT CAMPUS."**  
JEFF BURIFF

"It was a big decision," says Buriff. "I had financial goals in place with plans to expand my business, and saying yes to Grace would mean a different financial future." After praying about the offer, Buriff knew God was calling him back to Grace. In 2006, Buriff joined the Grace team. "I wouldn't trade it for the world," enthuses Buriff.

Buriff and his superb team of employees and student workers ensure that any permanent or temporary landscaping or structures are maintained, including

all the sports fields. With constantly changing regulations and methods, Buriff regularly attends conferences and seminars at large universities to learn the latest technology around efficient landscaping and better turf. Whether it's more versatile machinery, environmentally friendly fertilizers or maintenance-free plants, Buriff prides himself on finding the best means available and implementing the methods at Grace.

His efforts and professionalism show. In 2016, Buriff's grounds team received the Green Star Honor Award from the Professional Grounds Management Society. The award recognizes excellence in grounds management at colleges and universities across the nation.

One of Buriff's favorite parts of his job is doing what so many did for him when he was at Grace. "I love investing in the students. Most students don't have the background these days in basic grounds maintenance. So we teach them," he says. They not only learn how to run and service machinery safely, but they also learn what it means to serve.

"Our job is about servanthood," Buriff adds. "To help make Grace a great experience for everyone who ventures through our campus. To invest in a school that has an amazing mission to challenge students to be Christ-like in and out of the workplace — that's a place I'm proud to invest in."

This spring, Buriff and his crew will be installing two new outdoor community spaces around campus thanks to a \$25,000 anonymous donation. Kent Hall and McClain Hall will soon offer students an outdoor gathering space featuring a pergola (McClain), a gazebo (Kent), campfire pits and Polywood furniture, which also adorns some of the outdoor spaces in downtown Winona Lake. Polywood partnered with Grace to offer a special deal on its furniture. "We want to continue to create spaces where students can gather, relax and connect," says Buriff. "We're so thankful to Polywood and the donor who are making this possible."



Rendering of McClain's new outdoor space

# The 100-Year-Old Cheerleader

In 2017, Grace awarded Gerry Gagle-Velasco with the Honorary Alumni of the Year Award, which is given in recognition of non-alumni who have demonstrated a genuine interest in the cause of Christian higher education as represented by and through Grace and who have demonstrated their commitment to the mission of Grace.

Geraldine "Gerry" Gagle-Velasco was born on Oct. 2, 1919, as World War I was ending. Her 100-acre family farm in Portland, Indiana, didn't produce enough crops to support their family, but they raised and sold show horses to help make ends meet. Velasco was fond of pulling out an old photo of her grandfather who could be seen standing next to one of their prize horses, flanked by a brand-new car and a man whose hand he was heartily shaking.

Pointing to the anonymous man, Velasco would deliver the punchline: "That man is none other than Henry Ford, founder of the Ford Motor Company." As Velasco tells the story, Ford approached her grandfather, asking to buy the horse, but he declined until Ford offered to make a trade: his car for their horse. They had a deal.

Velasco didn't live long on the farm before her family moved to Ohio. When she came to know Jesus as her Savior as a young girl, Velasco attended occasional services at North Riverdale Grace Brethren Church in Dayton, Ohio, where she heard preachers including Dr. Louis S. Bauman and Dr. Herman A. Hoyt (ThM 39, ThD 46, BDiv 50).

Velasco went on to earn her first degree from Miami Jacobs Business College (Ohio) in 1940. She worked for a loan company in Ohio for 19 years before returning to Miami

University (Ohio) to earn her bachelor's degree in education, attending night classes while she continued to work. After graduating, Velasco moved to Phoenix, Arizona, where she taught fourth grade for 19 years and earned her master's degree in education from Arizona State University.

When Velasco moved to Phoenix, she began attending Grace Brethren Church of

past, organized multiple conferences at her local church where Grace was promoted. Besides being a proud member of the McClain Heritage Society, Gerry has also loyally followed the creation work of Dr. Don DeYoung (MDiv 83), professor emeritus of physics.

Velasco eventually met her husband, Gilbert Velasco, in 1996, and they moved to New Lebanon, Ohio, where they were married.

Five years into their marriage, Gilbert began suffering from dementia. Velasco found a couple in town to help her care for him, Craig and Sandy Cobaugh. After Gilbert passed away in 2009, the Cobaughs stayed on to assist Velasco, who was 90 years old, but with the energy, curiosity and tenacity of someone decades younger.

During the Cobaughs' relationship with Velasco, Craig and Sandy came to know Jesus as their Savior. Craig didn't know anything about God, and he planned on keeping it that way. "I used to tell her, 'If you think I'm interested in that, don't get started on me or I'm done here,'" he says. "But she never gave up on me. She always had the Bible out and was reading it. She started doing devotions with Sandy and me. Eventually she got us to go to church with her."

In 2010, when Sandy underwent critical surgery and Craig thought she might not make it out, he finally surrendered his life to Christ. Craig and Sandy got baptized in 2018, with their biggest cheerleader in the front pew.



Velasco poses for a photograph after a return trip home to Indiana during her college years in the 1940s.

Phoenix and teaching fourth-grade Sunday school. She loved the Grace Brethren Fellowship and kept her network in the Midwest, visiting Winona Lake for Grace Brethren conferences.

By association, she got to know Grace College & Seminary and became a stalwart promoter and supporter of the institution. Gerry welcomed Grace faculty into her home as they were often traveling through her area and, in the

*"[Velasco] left the majority of her estate to Grace. She hoped Grace would continue to grow its reach, training more pastors and missionaries and holding on to the truth of God's Word. In August 2020, **Grace received \$1.2 million** from her estate sale — one of the largest estate gifts in the school's history."*

On Jan. 13, 2020, at the age of 100, Velasco met Jesus face to face. Her parents never sold their old farm in Indiana, and when Velasco inherited it, she rented out the home on the property and leased the farm land to local farmers. When she died, she left the majority of her estate to Grace. She hoped Grace would continue to grow its reach, training more pastors and missionaries and holding on to the truth of God's Word.

In August 2020, Grace received \$1.2 million from her estate sale — one of the largest estate gifts in the school's history. The funds from her

estate will go towards the Grace Fund, which helps keep tuition affordable for students, and Grace's endowment, which provides institutional stability.

Rex Schrader (BS 92) served as the auctioneer, and an old family friend, Bruce Bailey, from a neighboring farm bought it. "Mr. Bailey was extremely generous," says Executive Vice President Dr. Drew Flamm, who served as one of the pallbearers for her burial service. "He loved Gerry and wanted to honor her and the institution she loved with his purchase."

Bailey learned how to drive a tractor on Velasco's farm at the age of 11, when Velasco's father, Orlo Gagle, needed some extra help. He worked for them for a week, and at the end of it, Gagle handed him a \$10 bill. "I didn't know there was that much money in the whole world," laughs Bailey. Bailey describes the Gagle family as the "best kind of people," whose faith defined them. "Where better to have our money go than to a faith-based institution," says Bailey. "My family will always refer to their farmland as the 'Gagle Farm.' I want to honor their legacy."

**To follow in Gerry's footsteps, you can leave your legacy at Grace College & Seminary through a variety of our planned giving services.**

**We can help you explore:**

- **Charitable Gift Annuities**
- **Bequest Designations** (Remember us in your will.)
- **IRA Rollover**
- **Life Insurance/IRA Beneficiary**
- **Trusts**
- **Gifts of Land or Personal Property**



**GRACE**  
COLLEGE &  
SEMINARY

To learn more, contact Stephen Gerber (MDiv 97), executive director of development, at 574.372.5100, ext. 6138 or at [gerbersd@grace.edu](mailto:gerbersd@grace.edu).

# ALUM NOTES

CONNECTING WITH OUR FAMILY OF FRIENDS

## CLASS NOTES

### 1970

**Reverend Leland R. Hovingh** (MRE 70) has retired from Africa Inland Mission after serving since July 1975. He and wife Marcia now reside in Belmont MI. [lmhovingh@aimint.org](mailto:lmhovingh@aimint.org)

### 1975

**01 Scott Firebaugh** (BA 75, MACSA 81) retired from 45 years of full-time teaching. He taught math, science and Bible in Christian schools, the last 14 years in Knoxville TN. Scott and wife Susan returned to Kokomo IN in June 2020, where he had taught for 30 years, so they could be close to their three daughters and friends. Their son teaches in the D.C. area. Susan also taught math in several schools, and they home-schooled for 16 years. Scott is now doing some tutoring and bus driving while enjoying Christian fellowship. [scfirebaugh@gmail.com](mailto:scfirebaugh@gmail.com)

### 1981

**Becky** (Lay ASN 81) **Scott** and husband Lawrence have relocated to Cedarville OH where Becky serves as a registered nurse at Friends Community Care of Yellow Springs and Lawrence is employed at Cedarville University. [becky@rebeccascott.net](mailto:becky@rebeccascott.net)

### 1982

**Reverend J. Randy Jenkins** (MDiv 82) began his third interim pastor role at Second Cape May Baptist Church (Marmora NJ) in

February 2021. After 33 years of long-term pastorates in North Carolina, Illinois and Michigan, he began serving with Interim Pastor Ministries in 2014. He previously served at the Frankenmuth Bible Church (MI) and Grace Chapel (West Liberty OH). [pr4ipm@gmail.com](mailto:pr4ipm@gmail.com)

### 1987

**02 Kenneth B. Wolfe** (BS 87), CPA and president and managing principal at Brown Schultz Sheridan & Fritz (BSSF), was recently named one of Central Penn Business Journal's 2020 "Game Changers: Most Admired CEO" award recipients and won in the Privately Held Company category. Ken and the other award recipients were recognized at a virtual event on Nov. 2, 2020. The Game Changer awards recognize Central Pennsylvania's most dynamic and impactful businesses and leaders who are committed to professional excellence, business growth and the community. "The entire BSSF team admires Ken for so many reasons," said Deborah Bowman, chief operating officer at BSSF, "including his leadership throughout the current pandemic, his vision for the firm and his dedication to our communities." As BSSF president and managing principal, Ken leads approximately 130 team members among five offices across Pennsylvania and Maryland. Ken has over 30 years of public accounting experience and is a key member of the BSSF management team specializing in working with construction, manufacturing, real estate and other for-profit entities. Outside of his professional life, Ken is an avid



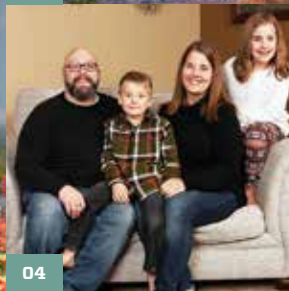
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volunteer within the Central Pennsylvania community. He serves as board member for the Whitaker Center for Science and the Arts and a board member and treasurer for Cornerstone Community Ministries in Elizabethtown. Additionally, Ken is a member and past president for the Elizabethtown Rotary Club and also serves on Mt. Calvary Christian School's finance committee. For more information about Ken, visit [www.bssf.com/our-team/kenneth-b-wolfe](http://www.bssf.com/our-team/kenneth-b-wolfe).

## 1990

**Kent L. Burckhart** (BS 90) lives in Rockledge FL with wife Penni and daughter Karissa. You can reach Kent at [kburckha@yahoo.com](mailto:kburckha@yahoo.com).

**Dr. Phil Yoder** (BS 90, MDiv 93) earned his Doctor of Ministry at Gateway Theological Seminary with his dissertation "Operation Barnabas: Designing and Implementing Coaching Training for Ministry Effectiveness."

## 1992

**Dave Marsh** (BS 92) has authored "A Conversation on Genesis 2-4," an eight-session guide for small group and personal use that is based upon the research he conducted for his 2019 novel "The Confessions of Adam." [davidmarsh@gmail.com](mailto:davidmarsh@gmail.com)

## 1997

**03 Mark Lee and Carrie Alicia (Kleinschmidt BS 97) Reichel:** Married on July 25, 2020. Despite a postponed wedding date due to the pandemic, the couple was

able to have a small in-person (and via Zoom), bilingual ceremony at the location of the children's ministry (Cusco, Peru) at which Carrie has been serving for the past 10 years. Guests were from at least eight countries and 12 states. The Reichels reside in Dacono CO where they serve as stateside missionaries. [pastryface75@gmail.com](mailto:pastryface75@gmail.com)

## 2004

**04 Reverend Michael C. Miller** (BA 04) has served as lead pastor at First Baptist Church (Petersburg IN) since September 2019 along with wife **Karis (Bushen BS 04)** and children Kyleigh (10) and Kohen (6). Michael earned his MA in Theological Studies from Liberty University in 2013. [pastor.mike574@gmail.com](mailto:pastor.mike574@gmail.com)

## 2008

**05 Scott** (BS 08) and Bridget **Moore:** Charlie William, Sept. 18, 2020. Scott was named head coach of the Grace Lancer men's basketball team in May 2019. [mooresd@grace.edu](mailto:mooresd@grace.edu)

**06 Amos Patrick Orr** (BS 08) and his three children, ages 7, 5 and 3, experienced the loss of their wife and mother, Chelsey, on June 1, 2020. A few months later, their hometown of Lake Charles LA was hit by two separate major hurricanes causing massive damage to the area and displacing their family from their home for a month. Amos shares that through all of this, God has been present and helped them day by day. He encourages others that no matter what storms life brings,

you can look to God to be your anchor and to keep you steadfast. [aporr3@yahoo.com](mailto:aporr3@yahoo.com)

## 2011

**07 Remy and Jessica (Stolle BS 11) Muneza:** Married on July 11, 2020. Jessica serves as a home health physical therapist at Fidelity Health Care (Dayton OH). The couple resides in Troy OH. [stolleje@hotmail.com](mailto:stolleje@hotmail.com)

## 2014

**08 Roger** (MDiv 14) and Stacie **Stuart II:** William Elliot, Nov. 9, 2020. William joins sisters Eliana (6) and Naomi (4) at their home in Bourbon IN. Roger continues to serve as pastor of Camp Creek Church (Etna Green IN). [rogerstuart2@yahoo.com](mailto:rogerstuart2@yahoo.com)

## 2015

**09 Robert** (BS 15) and **Mary (Mix BA 15) Gongwer:** Malachi, April 27, 2020. Malachi was welcomed by brother Rowan (2) at their home in South Bend IN.

**10** On Aug. 15, 2020, **Stephanie Seitz** (BA 15) completed a seven-month hike of the Pacific Crest Trail, a 2,650-mile trek from Mexico to Canada through California, Oregon and Washington. Generous donors and supporters helped her raise \$5,900 for Compassion International. Learn about her journey at [www.hikersteph.com](http://www.hikersteph.com).

# IN MEMORIAM

**Rev. Lester Washington Kennedy Jr.** (BDiv 52) went to be with Jesus on Nov. 17, 2020. He was pastor of Fairlawn Grace Brethren Church (VA) for over 33 years. Survivors include his wife of 70 years, Lois; sons: Lester (Susie) Kennedy III, Richard (Jeni) Kennedy and Danny (Valarie) Kennedy; daughters: Judy Knick and **Joyce** (BS 86) (Ron) **Yearout;** 13 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren and one great-great-granddaughter.

**11 Dr. Sterling Theobald** (S 52) ascended into the presence of his Lord on Sept. 24, 2020. He was a beloved husband, father, WWII veteran, medical doctor and missionary. Sterling attended Bryan College (TN) where he met his future wife Wanita (Nita) Mae; they were married on June 12, 1949. Sterling completed his bachelor's degree from Manchester College in 1951. They moved to Winona Lake IN so Sterling could attend Grace Theological Seminary for a year before beginning medical training at Indiana University. Between 1951 and 1956, he and Nita Mae had four children. After holding a job at a steel mill, Sterling took over a medical practice in Dyer (IN) in 1958, delivering over 800 babies during his nine years there. In 1970 the Theobalds joined the New Tribes Mission training staff in Canada and in 1979 they moved to St. Louis MO where Sterling worked as a medical



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doctor for the U.S. Army. Nita Mae passed away suddenly in 1992. In 1995, Sterling married Ruth Ann Cone who had been a widow for 20 years, and they moved to Grace Village in Winona Lake in 2005. Ruth Ann passed into God's presence on March 5, 2020, just after their 25th wedding anniversary. Sterling was a compassionate doctor and friend to all with a heart to serve God wherever he was. He will be lovingly remembered by: two daughters, Vivian (Tom) Probst (WI) and Mary Hunter (CO); one son: Paul (Jodi) Theobald (WI); one son-in-law: Bruce Cook (MO); two step-sons: **Kim** (BS 74, MDiv 80) (Jan) **Cone** (IN) and **Kip** (BA 90, MDiv 96, DMin 18) (**Mary** (Hicks BS 88)) **Cone** (IN); three step-daughters: **Camille** (**Cone** BA 76) (**Larry** (BA 77)) **Robbins** (TX), **Karisse** (**Cone** BS 79) (**Paul** (C 80)) **Moore** (WA) and **Calla** (**Cone** BA 88) (Marc) **Andrews** (IN); 18 grandchildren and step-grandchildren; and numerous great-and step-great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, his first wife, three brothers, one sister, his daughter, Cheryl Cook and his second wife.

**Rev. Donald E. Bishop** (BDiv 53) passed away on June 17, 2020. He is survived by daughters Gail (Gary) Liden and Paula Bishop, three grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. His dear wife **Hazel** (**Belcher** S 51) preceded him in death in April 2011.

**Rev. Roy J. Clark** (BDiv 54, ThM 55) entered the gates of heaven on Aug. 30, 2020. He attended Bryan College (TN) and then followed his life-long call to ministry by enrolling at Grace Theological Seminary. Roy married his college sweetheart, Virginia Maxine Lykens, on June 20, 1952. They were married for 27 years until Maxine passed away at the age of 50 on Oct. 23, 1979. Roy served for over 60 years at churches in Indiana, Ohio and Michigan as well as interim pastorates in Michigan, Ohio and Al-Ain, United Arab Emirates. From 2013 to 2016, Roy worked with Radio Bible Class Ministries in church ministry followed by Marketplace Chaplaincy with RBC. He served with the Timothy Network of the TEAM missionary organization. Roy served on the boards of Cleveland Hebrew Mission (35 years) and Cornerstone University (37 years). He was the founding pastor of two Christian schools: Baptist Christian (Cleveland OH) and Immanuel Christian (Ft. Wayne IN). Roy is survived by sons: James (Teresa) (OH), Ronald (Diane) (MI) and David (Susan) (OH); and brothers: Richard (Jean) Clark (NY), James (JoAnn) Clark (FL) and Gerald

(Nedra) Clark (NC). Roy and Gloria Kaddatz fell in love and were married on Aug. 8, 1981. Also surviving are Gloria and daughters: Lori Whitman (IN), Karen Kaddatz-Aho (MI) and Julie (Tim) Murdock (IN); 16 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.

**Lawrence "Larry" Lawlor** (BA 55, MARE 58), a longtime resident of Kosciusko County (IN), passed away on Jan. 21, 2021. In 1953, he married his sweetheart, **Dolly** (**Sivard** C 56), and they moved to Winona Lake. Larry, also a 1968 graduate of Ball State University, taught social studies at Warsaw Community Schools for 34 years and is especially remembered for teaching senior government and economics classes. He taught logic and critical thinking courses at Grace College, served two years as vice principal at Warsaw Community High School and was a member of Kosciusko County and Indiana State Teachers' Associations. In 1981, he was semi-finalist for Indiana's Teacher of the Year. Upon retiring in 1996, Larry focused his love for teaching on leading Bible study groups. He was a longtime member of Fellowship Baptist Church in Warsaw. His survivors include: his wife of 67 years, **Dolly**; children: **Debbie** (BS 77) (Gary) **Sutton** (IN), **David** (BS 78) (Sally) (IN), **Stephen** (BA 84) (Esther) (IN), **Becki** (ASN 81, BS 82) (**Scott** (BA 82)) **Holladay** (IN), **Larry** (**Cheryl** (Lancaster BS 87) **Lawlor** (IN) and Laurie (Joel) (IN); his sister and brother; 19 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

**Claudia Eileen** (**Stuck** BA 56) **Knepper** went to be with her Lord on Oct. 27, 2020. She attended Moody Bible Institute prior to going to Grace where she met **Lynn** (BA 60) **Knepper** by typing his term papers. They were united in marriage in the Grace College chapel on May 26, 1956. Throughout schools in Michigan, Wisconsin, Indiana and Vermont, Claudia served as an elementary teacher. She served her church as a Sunday school teacher, pianist and church secretary. Claudia ministered with Manna for Life, helped with mission work in Clintonville and was a prayer warrior. She also served on the board of Child Evangelism Fellowship. She was a giver and would find and offer anything people mentioned as a need or even a desire. After retiring from teaching and moving to Green Bay, Claudia worked at Wendy's, Arby's and as a community council member. Lynn passed away in 2003. Claudia is survived by sons Daniel (Cindy) Knepper and Paul (Cathy) Knepper, 13 grandchildren and 28 great-grandchildren.

**Marlene** (**Shoemaker** BS 57) **McKinney** went to be with her heavenly Father on Jan. 6, 2020. She was an active member of St. Mary's Parish (Williamston MI). She taught in the following places: St. Mary's School, Williamston Elementary, Stockbridge, Munith, Gregory and Grand Rapids Schools. Marlene loved her gift of teaching, which she freely gave to family and friends as well. Marlene was happiest when she was in the company of her family and friends. She loved cooking, bonfires, fishing, traveling and singing. Marlene was preceded in death by her husband Robert McKinney in 2015, parents, three brothers, four sisters, daughter Ladesca Hudson and son-in-law Kevin Hudson, daughter Andrea Smith and grandson Joshua McKinney. Surviving to cherish her memory are children: Teresa Pratt and George (Kim) McKinney; 13 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren.

**12 Rev. Dr. Werner Helmuth Bürklin** (BA 60) entered Jesus' presence on July 6, 2020. While studying at a Bible school in Paris, he met and fell in love with his future wife, **Inge** (**Dagmar** C 61). They got married in 1957 in Frankfurt, Germany, and were happily married for 61 years. He is survived by his children: Erik (Tammy), Heiko (Kay), Stephan (Barbara) and Linda (David) Pervenecki; and 10 grandchildren and their spouses. He had a deep love for Jesus, faithfully declaring the Gospel in 128 countries as an evangelist. Their family moved from Kingston, Jamaica, to Sao Paulo, Brazil, in 1978 where he was preparing and directing youth conferences with Youth for Christ. Later, he lived in Amsterdam, Netherlands, serving as director of the International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. In 1987 Werner moved to Boca Raton FL where he founded China Partner, which equips and trains emerging pastors in the church in China. China Partner's 30th anniversary celebration was held on his birthday just last year.

**13 Nancy Carol** (**Albert** BS 63) **Adams** passed away unexpectedly Jan. 11, 2021. On Dec. 20, 1959, she married Kent J. Adams. They shared 61 years of marriage together during which she and Kent raised their five children in Bremen IN, living there nearly 32 years before returning to Warsaw IN. Nancy enjoyed being a mom and volunteering at church, school and in the community. Nancy and Kent always enjoyed attending the many activities of their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She always kept active in her church and volunteered at Warsaw Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

She was a member of the Kosciusko County Historical Society, Kosciusko County Homemakers Extension Club, Kosciusko County Extension Board and a Master Gardener class of 2007. Nancy's motto was "Grow where planted." She will be lovingly remembered by: husband Kent; sons: Kent (Robin) Adams II (IN), Greg (Carol) Adams (IN) and Mark Adams (WA); daughters: Carol (Doug) Jennings (IN) and Leah Ann (James) Self (IN); 19 grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; brothers: Eugene (Bonnie) Albert and Dan (Sandy) Albert; and sisters: Sue Charlton and Sally (Roger) Bair.

**Pastor Robert "Bob" Alan Mundy** (MDiv 63) passed away on Dec. 17, 2020. On Feb. 7, 1959, he married Margaret Alene Baumgartner, and they raised three boys throughout their 61-year marriage. Bob graduated from Fort Wayne Bible College (IN) prior to attending Grace Theological Seminary. Bob's heart and passion was serving his Lord and Savior. He pastored at Wawasee Heights Baptist Church (Syracuse IN) and Kossuth St. Baptist Church (Lafayette IN) and served as a missionary for 27 years with Baptist Mid-Missions (Cleveland OH) and retired in 2008. Bob had a talent and love of playing the piano, especially playing hymns. Bob was a wonderful example of a faithful servant of the Lord. He will be lovingly remembered by: wife Margaret; sons: Ronald (Mary) Mundy (OH), David (Lisa) Mundy (IL) and John (Sandra) Mundy (IN); 10 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and brothers: Richard (Betsy) **Mundy** (IN) and **Steven** (BA 69) (Judy) **Mundy** (IN).

**Larry Lee Heisler** (C 64) passed away on Dec. 3, 2020, from complications of COVID-19. He was married on July 1, 1960, to Diane J. Truex, who preceded him in death on Aug. 12, 2015. He excelled in athletics and loved basketball and track and field. After being named to the Indianapolis Star's Top 100 seniors' basketball team, Larry played basketball and threw shot at Grace, setting a school record in shot put that stood for more than 25 years. Larry also graduated from the Indiana Police Academy and served on the City of Warsaw Police Department. Larry and his family began farming near Claypool and then opened the Warsaw Phytiness Center in the early 1980s. He began coaching track and field for Warsaw, later becoming head coach, where he won numerous Northern Lakes Conference sectional and regional titles. In the mid-90s, he coached track for Mitchell High School (Bedford IN), as well

as raised Angus cattle. The family then moved back to Etna Green in 2008 where Larry transported his Amish friends to and from work sites until retiring in 2015. He is survived by: son Randy (Tammy) (IN); three grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and brothers: Tom and Ted (IN).

**Sharen A. (Maierle BME 66) Staup** died on Dec. 30, 2020. On July 11, 1964, she married John K. Staup, who preceded her in death on Sept. 25, 2010. She was a special education teacher for the Greater Clark Community Schools (IN) for more than 20 years. A very musical person, Sharen played the organ and the piano and taught music and voice. She and John started Maranatha Baptist Church (Jeffersonville IN) where she served as organist, pianist and choir director and helped with the children's programs and Vacation Bible schools. Survivors include: daughters: **Dawn (Staup BS 90)** (Scott Rizek) **Weaver** (IN) and Heather Baumgart (IN); two grandchildren; siblings: **Loren** (BS 64) (**Donna (Taylor BS 64)) Maierle** (IN), **Ray** (C 68) (Liz) **Maierle** (IN), Caren (Lynn) Chappell (MI) and Sue Romans (IN); sister-in-law Betty Fike (IN); and brother-in-law Arthur Smith (OR).

**14 Jeanne (Foote BS 68) Gillenwater** passed away while surrounded by family on Jan. 19, 2021. She was married Dec. 21, 1968, to **Randy Kay Gillenwater** (BA 69). Though they divorced, they still shared the love of their daughter, **Janine** (BS 95), and their grandchildren. She taught kindergarten at Milford Elementary School (IN) and later worked for Kosciusko Family Medical Group

in records and insurance. She attended Calvary Baptist Church (Oswego IN) where she enjoyed worshipping and organizing the grandparent mentoring program. Jeanne was a humble lady who always chose others first and was a great advocate for others. She loved to give gifts and was the "Chocolate Chip Cookie Queen!" Jeanne genuinely loved people and most of all, she loved her family and her grandchildren. She will be lovingly remembered by: daughter **Janine (Matthew (C 97)) Seese** (IN); three grandchildren; honorary grandson; siblings: **Julie (Foote BS 80) (Phil (BS 12, MSRCA 13)) Steele** (IN) and **Robert** (BA 74, MDiv 75, CERT 81) (Peggy) **Foote** (OH); and many nieces and nephews.

**Dr. Myron James Houghton** (ThM 68) passed away on July 14, 2020, due to complications with COVID-19. After dedicating his life to the Lord, he began his Bible training at Moody Bible Institute, after which he earned degrees from Pillsbury College, Grand Rapids Baptist Theological Seminary, Grace Theological Seminary, Dallas Theological Seminary, Southern Methodist University, St. Thomas Theological Seminary, Concordia Seminary and an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Central Baptist Theological Seminary. "Dr. Myron" was passionate about giving students a comprehensive understanding of Scripture that led to spiritual maturity. He began his teaching career at Denver Baptist Bible College (1971-1983) and finished his teaching career at Faith Baptist Bible College and Theological Seminary (1983-2019), where he served as theology department chair. His students

remember his quick wit, endearing sense of humor, passion for a clear and accurate understanding of the Bible and a deep love for the Lord. Myron is survived by his twin brother George (Karen) and their children Rebekah and James and his sister Ginger.

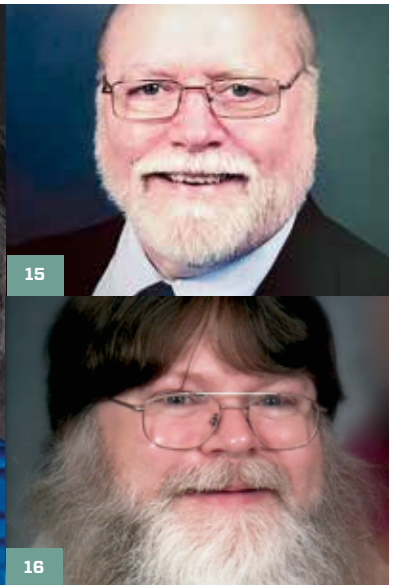
**15 Joseph L. Bowman** (BS 70) passed away on Nov. 18, 2020. Joe served in the U.S. Army in Germany where he specialized in photography. After serving in the Army, Joe was a professional photographer for many years and later became owner and manager of various real estate ventures. At the time of his death, Joe was semi-retired. Joe is survived by: his mother, Mildred C. Doehrer; and brothers: Allan Bowman, Frank Bowman and Thomas Doehrer and their families.

**Richard Allen Border** (BS 74) met his Savior on Oct. 15, 2020. Upon graduating from Grace, he taught fifth and sixth grades with the Everett Area School District (PA) until 2004. He was head teacher of the Mann-Monroe School and president of the local teachers' association for most of his teaching years. He worked as a DJ at Bedford WBFD and Everett WSKE radio stations. He was a member of the Community Grace Brethren Church (Everett PA). He is survived by siblings: John Charles (PA), Carole (PA) and Terry (Erick Osorio) Border (DE); his caregiver Dona Helsel; and many nieces and nephews.

**James "Jim" William White** (BS 74) died on Nov. 9, 2020. Jim's family were very early members of Sunnyside Grace Brethren Church where he still attended. Upon

graduating from Grace, Jim also completed a bachelor's degree in education (Central Washington University) and a master's degree in education (Heritage University). He retired in 2014 from Prosser Heights Elementary and then was a substitute teacher in the Prosser School District. Jim met wife Susan Hall through correspondence and married her in June 1992. Jim loved his family and is survived by: wife Susan; daughters **Anna (White BA 15)** (Benjamin) **Burris** and Jamie White; one granddaughter; brother **Daniel A.** (BA 72, MDiv 76, DMin 11) (**Judi (Burns C 73)) White**; sisters: **Rebecca L. (White C 76) Aiger** and Judy A. (Jeff) Simerl; and extended family.

**16 Richard "Rich" Wroughton** (BA 79, CERT 87) passed away Nov. 14, 2020. He was married on Aug. 22, 1977, to **Cynthia "Cindy" Jane (Stewart C 78)**. They shared 43 years of marriage and raised five children together. Rich spent many years working as a substitute teacher in Warsaw IN and most recently, he was a familiar part-time face at Walmart (Warsaw IN). He enjoyed worshipping with his church family at Winona Lake Grace Brethren Church where he was the third-grade Sunday school teacher. Rich loved playing the guitar, reading and acting in plays, and he enjoyed going to the Wagon Wheel Center for the Arts (Warsaw IN). He always made time for his children, and most of all he loved church and his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Rich was a loving husband, father and grandfather and will be dearly missed by his family and friends. He will be lovingly remembered by: his wife-**Cindy** (IN); children: Laura Wroughton,



Jenny Wroughton (IN), **Ryan** (BS 10) (**Emma** (Sanders BS 11)) **Wroughton** (IA), Rachel Brown (IN) and **Carrie** (C 12) **Castillo** (IN); grandchildren: Natalie and Zachary Brown; two brothers: Frank (Sandy) Wroughton (IL) and Jon (Julie) Wroughton (IN); and sister **Jane** (Wroughton C 82) (Kevin) **Pepin** (WI). He was preceded in death by parents **Charles R.** (S 59) and Trudy **Wroughton** and sister Sue Howell.

**Charles Mark Simpson** (ThM 82) passed away on Nov. 5, 2020, of coronavirus complications. As a talented artist, he attended art schools in Norwich CT and Sarasota FL. When the draft began for the Vietnam War, Mark enlisted in the Air Force and was assigned to Omaha (SAC) as an illustrator, creating briefings for generals and other officers. While stationed there, he attended Grace Baptist Church where he met and married Karen Titcomb in 1969. Mark was discharged in the fall of that year, and they moved to Salt Lake City UT where Mark felt called to mission work. Mark enrolled in Montana Institute of the Bible in 1972 and upon graduation from MIB, decided to continue his ministry training at Grace Theological Seminary. Mark then served as a pastor for churches in Utah, California, Idaho, Montana, Kansas and Nebraska until 2005. Mark and Karen had four children: Jon, Peter, Philip and Suzanne.

**Lawrence "Larry" Lloyd** (S 86) went home to be with his Lord on Jan. 23, 2021. On Nov. 3, 1973, he married his best friend and love of his life, **Kathryn "Kathy" (Carpenter MABC 88) Lloyd**. They shared the joy of raising four children together, becoming grandparents and sharing everything thrown at them in their 47 years of marriage. Larry grew up in Australia as the son of missionary parents. He enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and served as a radar communications specialist from 1967 until his honorable discharge in 1970. After his military service and getting married, he moved from Detroit to attend Grace. He studied for three years at Grace and then started working at Zimmer, Inc. (Warsaw IN); he worked there as a C.A.D. designer for many years and spent the last 40 years making the area his home. Larry enjoyed the fellowship of his church family at Winona Lake Grace Brethren Church where he shared his heart for teaching and taught Sunday school for many years. He will be lovingly remembered by: his wife, **Kathy** (IN); sons: Christopher (Grace) Lloyd (IN) and **Jonathan Lloyd** (C 02) (IN); daughters:

Marilyn (Austin) Valentine (IN) and Abby Lloyd (IN); two grandchildren; and his sister.

**Abel David Jr.** (MDiv 87, MABC 88) passed away unexpectedly on Nov. 8, 2020. He was married to **Rebecca (Blackburn C 92) David** and though they divorced, they always shared their love of their three children. Abel earned his bachelor's degree from New York University prior to attending Grace. He also served in the U.S. Navy and was honorably discharged after his service. Abel taught hundreds of children as a teacher, retiring in 2012. He had been a resident of Kosciusko County (IN) for the past 30 years where he was a member of Christ's Covenant Church (Winona Lake IN). He honored his Lord by passionately and actively serving through his prison ministry and enjoyed volunteering when needed, being a member of Men Following Christ, and Narcotics Anonymous. He had a heart for serving and helping others and for the past five years, he served as a counselor for Serenity House and Rehabilitation (Warsaw IN). He will be lovingly remembered by: his daughter Jessica David (IN); sons: Joshua David (CA) and Jeremy David (IN); his former wife **Rebecca** (IN); and sisters: Sandra (Clif) Cox (OH) and Gale (Edward) David Harris (IN).

On Jan. 14, 2021, **David Michael Rhodes** (BS 05) was welcomed home by his heavenly Father. He played goalie on the Lancer men's soccer team while at Grace. He went on to earn his master's degree and followed his calling to work with at-risk youth to help them see their worth and potential. David's knowledge of the Bible was vast, and his theology went well beyond what many around him could follow, but he had a way of reaching young people. He loved art in many forms, especially sketching, photography and tattoos, and all genres of music, from jazz to heavy metal, but especially liked 1930s and '40s music. His daughter, Isabella, was the love of his life. David had many who loved him, but his closest friendships were with his "brother," Pete Brucato, YunTheng To and Stormy Fisel. Surviving David are: his parents, Steve and Deb Rhodes (IN); daughter Isabella Rhodes (IN); and extended family. Three people received the gift of life from David through the Indiana Donor Network.

**17 Michael "Mike" Keith Jones** (BS 10) passed away on Jan. 9, 2021. Mike married **Deonda (Fritz BS 99)** on July 3, 1993. He loved spending time with his growing

family. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, and beekeeping and liked playing pool and giving gifts. Mike considered himself a lifelong learner. Surviving Mike are his wife **Deonda** (IN); their children: **Zackary** (C 17) (Katie) (IN), Nathyn (Kortney Stahl) (IN) and Johl (IN); and two grandchildren: Serenity and Jay. Also surviving are his siblings, Anthony "Tony" Jones (IN) and Johnny (Lucy Antaya) Townsend (IN).

**Charles N. Hess** (MANPM 19) passed away on Nov. 20, 2020. Charles graduated in 1982 from Griffith High School and then proudly served in the U.S. Army as a chaplain's assistant. He was taking additional courses in Christian theology through Grace to supplement his nonprofit management degree. He adored his nieces and nephews and great nieces and great nephews. Charles was also an animal lover and always had pets in his household. He is survived by: brother Dale (Connie) Hess (IN); close friend and roommate Joyce Light; uncles: Roger (Janet) Hess and William (Ivory) Steinard; sister-in-law Lenore (Scott) Enloe; niece Krystal (Mike) Varady; and nephews: Douglas Bales, Blake (Jessica) Stokes and Corey Hess. He was preceded in death by his parents Jay and Maxine Hess, brother Don Hess and infant brother Neal.

**Dewey Jack Melton** passed away on Oct. 18, 2020. On July 29, 1950, he married Beverly Anne Aughinbaugh, with whom he shared 68 years of marriage before she passed away on Aug. 24, 2018. Not long after they were married, Dewey enlisted in the United States Army on Dec. 6, 1951, and proudly served in Korea for which he received the Korean Service Medal, three bronze stars and the National Defense Service Medal. He was honorably discharged on Dec. 5, 1954. Dewey worked for Simon Brothers (1947-1972) as institutional food salesman and ended his career at Grace College & Seminary as field representative and financial planner as well as director of supporting services from 1972 until he retired in 1989. Dewey had been a resident of Kosciusko County (IN) for the past 46 years where he was a member of Winona Lake Grace Brethren Church. He will be lovingly remembered by his sons: **David D.** (BS 79) (Darlene) **Melton** (FL) and Don J. (Michelle) Melton (IN); four beloved grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; and two sisters.

## WHAT'S NEW?

**Submit an Alum Note.** Tell us the latest news in your life at [www.grace.edu/alumnotes](http://www.grace.edu/alumnotes) and choose to publish it as an Alum Note in an upcoming issue of *Grace Story*.

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## TELL US YOUR STORY

If you're a Grace graduate, completed a certification or attended classes, we want to hear from you. Tell us about your career history, accomplishments, how Grace influenced you, what you are doing with your college or seminary education today and/or how God is using you for His purposes. If you have a former classmate or alum you know who has a story you think *Grace Story* should feature, go ahead and share his/her story! Visit [www.grace.edu/gracestory](http://www.grace.edu/gracestory).





Dear friends,

One of the bonuses of working on Grace's campus is the option to swing by Alpha Dining Commons to grab lunch. I enjoy watching the students take a break from their day's activities and unwind. I hear a lot of laughter. I witness intentional conversations. I see students praying, and I hear them offering one another words of comfort and encouragement. Without fail, I'm transported back to the late 1970s, when I sat in a seat (perhaps not quite as comfortable as the ones they sit in now) with my cereal of choice (you've got to see the latest cereal bar!) and experienced such fun fellowship.

Back when I was a student, there weren't many places to gather other than Alpha Dining. It's where we spent much of our free time, and I remember it with great fondness — even if a few of my lunches may have stretched through the late Professor Emeritus R. Wayne Snider's (BDiv 53, ThM 55) history class.

Take a moment and recreate the smells and sounds of Alpha Dining Commons. What funny or meaningful memory comes to mind? For over 50 years, Alpha Dining has been the hub of campus — not just where we feed our bodies, but also where we nourish our hearts. It's where so many of our favorite Gracie traditions were hatched. Maybe you met your future spouse there, or created the perfect ice cream sundae, or discovered your best friend or fell in love with coffee.

It's one of the most life-giving places on our campus, so I can't wait for it to expand through the latest renovation plan. It'll give our students more space to allow for the transformational work of Jesus in their hearts, minds and bodies.

I invite you to join me in enlarging the heartbeat on campus through the expansion of Alpha Dining Commons. If you'd like to participate in any way (donations, volunteering, praying — you name it!), please contact me at 574-372-5100, ext. 6129 or at [duncandl@grace.edu](mailto:duncandl@grace.edu).



*Denny*

**Dennis Duncan (BS 80)**  
Director of Alumni &  
Community Engagement

P.S. Drop me a line with one of your favorite Alpha memories at [duncandl@grace.edu](mailto:duncandl@grace.edu).

# HOMEcoming 2021

## THE RED REUNION



# OCTOBER

## Featuring:

**The Annual Homecoming Parade / Homecoming Chapel / Class Reunions**

Reminder: We invite you to submit nominees for the 2021 Alumni College and Seminary Awards. Visit [www.grace.edu/alumni/awards](http://www.grace.edu/alumni/awards) to propose your nominees.

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# Men's Soccer Team Scores Championship

**The Grace men's soccer team won its first national championship in team history.**



Grace defeated Bethel 4-0 in the 2020 NCAA national championship game on Nov. 21, in Kissimmee, Florida. The national championship is the fourth title in school history, joining men's basketball (1992, NAIA), volleyball (1995, NCAA) and women's golf (2019, NCAA).

The Lancers outclassed the Pilots from start to finish. Grace's possession wore down and eventually broke Bethel's efforts, resulting in an emphatic 4-0 shutout to clinch the national championship. You can follow all of our sports teams online at [www.GCLancers.com](http://www.GCLancers.com).