



2017 Annual Report

GRACE POINT CHURCH OF GOD (EDMONTON)

720 – 62 Street SW

Annual General Meeting

June 25, 2017 - 6:00 p.m.

Vision:

*To be a life-changing
community of God's
grace and love for the
world*

Mission:

*To make more and
better Christ-followers*

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message from the lead pastor

blessed to be a blessing

As I look back on this past year, I'm very grateful for God's grace and goodness to us as a church family. We have truly been blessed in the face of what has been for many a very challenging year. The words of Psalm 67:1-2 (NIV) come to mind as I think of you: *"May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine upon us, that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among the nations."*

The grace that God gives us – the ways that His face shines upon us by way of the blessings He bestows upon us – is not ultimately for our enjoyment and comfort. It's to be a witness to an unbelieving world that there is a God who loves them and wants to be in relationship with them. I am so encouraged when I reflect on how we as the Grace Point Church family evermore live this truth and understand that we are blessed to be a blessing.

I'm encouraged by a church family that extends a warm welcome to all who join us as we gather for worship. I'm grateful for a body of believers that desires to faithfully follow Jesus and lovingly represents him to the communities in which we live. I'm encouraged by a community of faith that walks with the tired, the broken and the lonely. I'm grateful for a congregation that is open to the Holy Spirit's conviction and direction. I'm thankful for each one of you and the impact you make at and through Grace Point.

I'd like to thank the staff for their dedication this past year, particularly for the way each of them stepped up when I was on medical leave. I'd also like to thank the Elders for their encouragement and support as they continued to faithfully oversee the ministries of Grace Point. And, I'm grateful for our team of very capable Trustees – thank you for your wise stewardship.

As you look at the snapshots of God's face shining upon us in the pages that follow, join me in thanking God for all He has done, is doing and will continue to do!

George Lutzer

GATHERING TO WORSHIP GOD

worship services From the warm handshake of the greeter at the door to the smiling ushers handing out bulletins to the person seeking out new faces post-service at the Café or in the lobby, our Welcome Team makes every effort to ensure no one slips in or out of our building without a friendly interaction.

By the way, you too are a very important member of our Grace Point Welcome Team! We love hearing from first-time guests about how warmly they were welcomed.

A special addition this year has been the choir assembled for a defined time commitment to perform during the services.

“...an opportunity to get in the presence of God to glorify and honour our Savior. (Ps. 100:2) I’m always excited to join voices with the congregation in praise of our great God...”

worship teams & choir

Whether through modern worship songs or favorite hymns, music provides an avenue of expression of our love to God. Over 50 volunteers – singers, musicians and technicians – work together to lead our congregational worship.

youth worship band

Five talented volunteers give of their time to encourage and challenge 14 young musicians to bring glory to God through music. The coaches work with two youth bands, developing their musical abilities while exercising the virtues of humility, respect for one another and confidence that are integral to leading worship.

The worship bands lead youth worship nights and have showcased their talents and gifts on Sunday morning as well. We’re excited to integrate those who are ready into our regular worship teams.

prayer Whether before or after service, whether praying for or praying with, the prayer team faithfully brings this congregation and the individuals in it before the throne of God.

2016 Attendance

Sundays	510
Christmas	848





graceKidz This is where the mass exodus mid-service heads to worship with gusto and learn about how Jesus impacts their young lives.

Our Sunday morning program for kids aged three to grade five is high-energy and an investment in our most precious resource.

We've already warned Pastor Craig about the wave of 25 or so fantastic kids who will be joining Route 67 and Youth in fall 2018!

route 67 Our pre-teen ministry for kids in grades six and seven provides a bridge between GraceKidz and Youth.

Meeting Sunday mornings in a small group setting, leaders encourage kids to wrestle with their faith questions and how God's Word applies to their circumstances and challenges.

nursery Twenty-two brave volunteers provide care to infants, crawlers and toddlers allowing their parents to enjoy uninterrupted time to worship in the service.

*60 great volunteers
+ 170 enthusiastic kids
= GraceKidz*

baptism & child dedication

Making a public proclamation of faith and commitment is an important component of a Christ-follower's faith journey. This past year 11 families dedicated themselves to raising their children to honor God and five people were baptized.

german service

Sunday and Wednesday mornings a group of our seniors continue to meet for worship and Bible study in the German language, a part of our heritage here at Grace Point.

christmas and easter 848 people participated in our two Christmas services where we celebrated our Savior's birth and 723 joined us on Easter Sunday where we celebrated Jesus' resurrection and the opportunity we have to enjoy eternal life in Him.



GROWING A COMMUNITY OF CHRIST-FOLLOWERS

children

Discipleship begins early. We become what we are committed to, so we feel it is of utmost importance to help our children and youth form habits that will shape their character into adulthood.

awana The vibrant mid-week AWANA Club ministry is focused on embedding Scriptures in the hearts and minds of kids, all while having a lot of fun! – or as Pastor LuAnne calls it: “The fastest one and a half hours in my entire week.”

Besides high-energy games and fun, a prayer time was incorporated this year inviting a clubber to share a prayer request and then inviting another child to volunteer to pray for the need. It was powerful to watch the kids hold each other up in prayer.

It's rewarding to see many of the kids who have finished AWANA return as junior leaders. Many of the kids who serve as junior leaders in AWANA or GraceKidz continue to embrace a servant heart that reflects Jesus' character, eventually becoming Youth leaders.

kidsPray Once a month on a Sunday afternoon about 20 kids stay after the service to enjoy lunch together and then meet to pray and learn more about prayer: how to pray; different ways to pray and develop their faith muscles. This year has included a prayer labyrinth, a prayer walk through the neighborhood and making homeless packets to give out during the winter. It's exciting to see the kids embrace prayer with such openness.

*60 awesome volunteers
+ 138 energetic kids
= AWANA*



AWANA Highlights

- ▶ \$517 raised to support an AWANA program in Haiti
- ▶ AWANA prize "money" donated to buy a World Vision package - "School Feeding for 50 Children"
- ▶ Special events included:
 - Crazy Hair Night
 - PJ Night
 - Ice Cream Night
 - AWANA Grand Prix car race
 - and the ever popular "Pie-in-the-Face" of the Leaders Night.

youth and young adults

We are so incredibly blessed to have such a great and diverse group of youth and young adults as part of this church family.

gpcya The focus for our busy Grace Point Church Young Adults (18 to 25-ish) is building a discipleship culture of their own: finding community, exploring or deepening a personal walk with God and reaching out to non-Christian friends and colleagues.

In addition to monthly get-togethers, a number of our young adults also invest in the Core Youth ministry as volunteer leaders "paying it forward".

"What makes being a youth leader worth it is watching a kid really 'get it' and take their faith seriously."

core youth If you've never been around on a Friday night, you likely have no idea that 50-70 junior and senior high youth get together here weekly to find a place to belong, develop positive relationships and discover truths about themselves and about God.

Pastor Craig has assembled a group of 16 tremendous Youth leaders in whom he invests time developing spiritual leadership and a discipleship culture. They, in turn, invest in youth building intentional relationships through shared experiences and engaging activities to encourage youth to grow and take ownership of their faith in God.



Core Youth Event Highlights

- ▶ Frostover
- ▶ Oil Kings Game
- ▶ 24 Hour Justice Experience
- ▶ DEEPER
- ▶ GPC Spring Yard Clean-up
- ▶ Worship & Prayer Night
- ▶ Corn Maze
- ▶ Giant Games Night
- ▶ West Edmonton Mall Hunt
- ▶ Christmas Banquet

...46 events in total!

adults

At Grace Point our goal is for people to find authentic community as they nurture their relationship with Jesus. While much of that happens organically, there are a number of avenues to foster connection and community.

bible studies For those seeking to understand Scripture in greater depth, Bible studies provide that opportunity.

Women's Bible studies continue to thrive with about 50 women representing a beautiful blend of all stages of life sharing highs and lows of day-to-day life and how Christ is shaping and molding each woman to become more like Him.

Likewise, a group of 17 men gathered weekly during the AWANA calendar to explore the Biblical model of missional discipleship in real terms and challenge each other to action.

Our single parent family group also met for Bible study and to support each other in their unique challenges.

athletics Ramp Up Sports is a mix of weekly drop-in nights, tournaments and leagues all geared to build relationships, stay active and, for many, offering a low-key way to rub shoulders with Christ-followers. And where else do you have a devotional at half-time?

- ▶ Over 180 participants weekly
- ▶ Draw 75% of participants from our surrounding community and other churches

Meanwhile, the annual Golf Tournament in June draws about 40 golfers who enjoy a very fun time of building community while walking through green pastures, near still waters...golf is a most pastoral pursuit. ☺

Pickleball ■ Badminton ■ Basketball ■ Ball Hockey



care ministry When families or individuals are in need of a bit of extra support, our Hamper and Meals ministries are there to bridge the gap.

Whether it's a ready-prepared meal to share after a surgery, illness, a loss or a new addition to the family; a food hamper to help stretch the food budget; or, someone in temporary financial need, we see the Grace Point church family step up.

connecting and serving

We have over 300 volunteers that serve together at Grace Point! It's in serving together that we connect to like-minded people whom we can encourage in life and who in turn inspire us.

From the tellers who count the Sunday tithes and offerings, to the folks who pitch in with building maintenance tasks, to those who ensure the library is stocked and orderly, there are many "behind the scenes" volunteers who faithfully serve and are instrumental in the life of Grace Point.

"This year we thought we had more volunteers to put together Christmas hampers than required. Yet God knew what was needed – at the end – the number hampers of donated matched the number of hampers needed exactly."

45 Meals Ministry volunteers blessed more than 30 Grace Point families with 180 meals!



MULTIPLYING OUR FAITH BY SERVING OUR WORLD

families on mission There are currently five Missional Communities active. These are mid-sized groups of people who are living UP-IN-OUT lives together. The UP-IN-OUT life strives to imitate the life Jesus lived:

UP: Jesus spent time with His Father (Luke 6:12).

IN: Jesus invited others in and shared life with them (Luke 6:13-16).

OUT: Jesus reached out to a lost and lonely world (Luke 6:17-19).

These intergenerational groups gather regularly in the homes of Grace Point church family members for prayer, reflection, encouragement and sharing in order to live a three dimensional life (UP-IN-OUT) like Jesus.

Some examples of how groups are doing life together on mission for God:

- ▶ Serving meals at Ronald McDonald House for out-of-town families with children in hospital receiving critical care.

"It's been great to see families join us for Sunday service during their stay and light up when they recognize us."

- ▶ Building relationship with Muslim families that God is bringing to us. National statistics suggest that 97% of Muslims in Canada have not been in a Canadian home in the past 10 years. This group makes a practice of inviting Muslims new to Canada or visiting/studying at the University of Alberta into their homes for a meal and good company, building relationships as groundwork for sharing the hope and freedom we have in Christ.

"While this venue [Ronald McDonald House] does not allow for openly speaking of our faith, we have been honored to pray for those who have asked for prayer."

- ▶ A 3-month challenge to live Matthew 10 to follow the directive: "as you go proclaim the Good News".
- ▶ Meeting regularly for Sunday potluck lunch, and currently exploring Luke 10:25-37: How do I love my neighbour?
- ▶ Another group with an interest in Inner City Outreach has been sharing testimonies of their individual journeys to faith and a life walking in step with Christ.

in our neighborhood

- ▶ Host bi-monthly Ellerslie Community League Family Movie Nights
- ▶ Host Ellerslie Community League special events such as a Valentine's Day event and Community League Day
- ▶ Continue to build relationship with Ellerslie Campus School through volunteer coaching and use of gymnasium practice space
- ▶ Pastor Dan's representation on the Ellerslie Community League Board
- ▶ Core Youth Service Nights

summer camps It is great to see kids, from families who would not otherwise send their kids to church, hear the gospel message with their parents' full permission through summer camps.

Art Camp

For the creatively-inclined, the Kid's Summer Art Camp provides an opportunity to try out different art techniques while reflecting on God, the beauty He has created all around us and how we have been uniquely shaped by Him.

Art Camp week is a strange time in the children's wing – strange because it is unusually quiet as 75 kids focus on their artistic creations!



Soccer Camp

In conjunction with Athletes in Action, a Christian sports outreach organization, Grace Point offers a five day soccer camp for elementary kids. 75 kids learn skills from post-secondary athletes and coaches while learning about God.

Basketball Camp

A new offering running this year in conjunction with Athletes in Action has filled all 60 spaces in its inaugural year!

sharing our space In the interest of having a positive impact in our community and providing opportunities for our neighbors to get to know us, our facilities are well-utilized during the week:

- ▶ Canadian Blood Services mobile blood clinics
- ▶ Ellerslie Campus School
- ▶ Ellerslie Community League Board meetings
- ▶ Alcoholics Anonymous
- ▶ Ellerslie Road Preschool
- ▶ Oasis Church of Life
- ▶ UNITE worship service
- ▶ Legacy Conference in partnership with GO Ministries and Horizons International

missions partnerships and projects

Local

- ▶ Ronald McDonald House
- ▶ Mustard Seed
- ▶ Grace Outreach (GO) Ministries

Regional

- ▶ Canadian Church of God Ministries (CCoGM)
 - Missionary Support – Micronesia, Africa, Europe and the Middle East
 - Church Planting and Redevelopment
 - Regional leadership conferences: Theologue, Pastor and Spouses Retreat, LeaderConnect
- ▶ Pleasant Valley Church of God (Vernon, BC)
- ▶ Regional Church of God Events
 - EMERGE – Youth Leadership Training
 - 55+ Camp
 - Family Camp
 - Alberta Children's Camp
 - Young Adult Winter Escape
 - Alberta Children's Ministry Retreat
- ▶ Athletes in Action

EMERGE participants:

"God definitely made me realize how much I need Him in everything I do, even the little things like starting my day or talking to my friends. He made me realize how His love is a constant thing, and it never fails, He never fails."

"My favorite part of the weekend was the alone, silent time with God. It's something that I haven't ever done...it was eye-opening and is something I plan on doing on a regular basis."

CCoGM Highlight

EMERGE is a three-year leadership development and discipling program for Grade 10 and 11 students.

This year there are 16 students from five different churches in Western Canada who attended the kick-off weekend and will follow through the program with monthly mentor meetings.



International

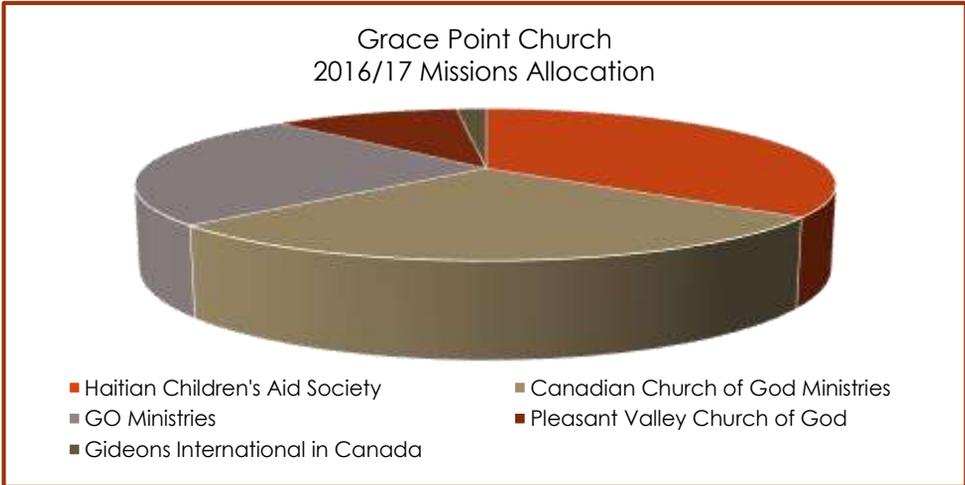
- ▶ 3Worlds Roundtable: Overseeing missions in Europe and the Middle East
- ▶ Haitian Children's Aid Society (HCAS)
- ▶ Gideon's International



GO Ministry serves teams reaching Muslims locally and internationally through training and equipping, meeting practical needs and sharing the Good News . There is 1 Christian missionary for every 450,000 Muslims world wide and there are around 100,000 Muslims living in Edmonton and area.

HCAS provides funding and support for Haiti Children's Home (HCH) in Nirvard, Haiti. In addition to new projects, the daily provision of basic amenities, medical care, education, recreation and spiritual enrichment, Haiti Children's Home empowers and supports their community by providing:

- Full-time care for orphaned and abandoned children.
- Foster Care program
- Community Clinic
- Temporary care for ill & malnourished children
- Nutrition/Milk Program
- Pre-school & Primary Education



LEADERSHIP AND STAFF – 2016/17

- ▶ **Board of Trustees** – provides stewardship and management of the finances and the facility operations
 - ▶ Byron Volkman Chairperson
 - ▶ Barry Thompson Secretary
 - ▶ Heidi Buchsdrucker Treasurer/Board member
 - ▶ Reed Schofield Board member
 - ▶ Henry Rempel Board member
 - ▶ Arvid Schimke Board member

- ▶ **Board of Elders** – provides spiritual guidance and oversight to the pastoral staff and ministries
 - ▶ Cal Herauf Chairperson
 - ▶ Jim Stokoe Member
 - ▶ Ralph Buchsdrucker Member
 - ▶ Mid-term vacancy Member
 - ▶ Mid-term vacancy Member

- ▶ **Pastoral Staff**
 - ▶ George Lutzer Lead Pastor
 - ▶ Egbert Lubek Discipleship Pastor
 - ▶ LuAnne Birkholz Children's Pastor
 - ▶ Craig Robertson Youth Pastor
 - ▶ Dan Schultz Athletics/Community Service Pastor

- ▶ **Supporting Staff**
 - ▶ Lucy Grenke Director of Operations
 - ▶ Adria Switzer Office Administrator/Director of Worship Arts
 - ▶ Heidi Belter Women's Bible Studies
 - ▶ Lindsey Arnason Children's Ministry Assistant
 - ▶ Joy Verner Children's Ministry Assistant
 - ▶ Olga Dyck Custodial Team
 - ▶ Katja Niessen Custodial Team
 - ▶ Wally Niessen Custodial Team
 - ▶ Jennifer Newell Accounts Clerk

Pages intentionally omitted.

