



TACOMA GRACE
BIBLE CHURCH

Together, We Press On!

The year 2022 has come and gone, and God's faithfulness toward us can be seen through it all. The past year has seen a lot of opportunities to trust in God's promises and to seek His will. Many prayers were dedicated to the Lord for the health of our friends and acquaintances, protection and repair of our aging building, preparation and guidance in teaching, and many other praises and petitions. This year, I pray that we continue to grow together as the body of Christ by studying, believing, and obeying His word. Let us grow ever steadier and stronger in our goal of exultation, edification, and evangelization while we rest in the power of the Spirit to work in and through us.

Fellowship

As we learn about and grow in our unity in the body of Christ, it should become immediately evident that fellowship opportunities are not just social gatherings; they are how we experience the love of Christ tangibly while we await his return (*1 Jn. 4:9-12; Heb. 10:23-25*). This does not mean you must come to every meeting but consider that every meeting is an opportunity to enjoy God's gift of joy in our common salvation. Much of what follows is an explanation of the heart and the hope behind each of our meetings and events, the hope to be pleasing to God through fellowship with Him and His children (our fellow believers).

We are blessed to have frequent **fellowship meals** after church. Our next meal is February 12th. These are excellent opportunities to get to know and interact with one another. These meals are for everyone—join us! And keep an eye out for future fellowship meals!

We have a men's and a women's group, too. For the men, join us on second and fourth Saturdays at 8:00 AM for **Men's Breakfast**. We are studying the book of Revelation, as well as sharing and praying for one another. For the ladies, join us second and fourth Tuesdays for **Helping Hands** and **Sew-So** (bring a craft to work on!) If you are a male or a female, one of these groups is for you!

Prayer

The prayer-life of this church is integral to our health. As we pray together, we grow in fellowship with God and with each other and we love and help one another (*Dan. 9:18; Psa. 5:3; Phil. 4:6; 1 Thess. 5:17; Col. 4:2; Jas. 5:6, 16; Eph. 6:18; and 1 Jn. 5:14-16*).

We have **Prayer Meeting** Wednesdays at 6:30 PM, where we have a brief study in the Psalms, followed by an evening of prayer. Once per quarter we host a **Concert of Prayer** (Sunday at 6:00 PM), where we pray and sing praise to the Lord. **Prayer Week** is also quickly approaching (April 2-8), during which the elders will give a brief lesson each night on the gospel of Jesus, followed by prayer and fellowship.



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These prayer events are “mountain peaks” in TGBC’s fellowship, where we bear one another’s burdens (*Gal. 6:2*). This is where “the rubber meets the road” between learning to live in the body and living in the body. The effectiveness and benefit of prayer cannot be overstated. If you have not joined us for corporate prayer, there are many opportunities. I encourage each of you to come as often as you can.

Teaching

This year I renew my commitment to you and to the Lord to be diligent and faithful in studying God’s word, to apply sound literal hermeneutics, and to depend on the guidance and filling of the Spirit to accomplish these tasks.

Preaching & Classes

Last year we studied Genesis 1-11 and First John on Sunday mornings, as well as all four gospels (the Life of Messiah) in our summer class. This year, we will study **Second and Third John**, and **Genesis 12-25**. This year’s summer class will focus on what scripture teaches about who we are in Christ and how we, as Christians living in the dispensation of grace, are to live our lives (*Eph. 1:18-21*). I hope you will join us from June to August for this study of **The Spiritual Life!**

Also, we have begun a winter class called **Interlocked**, in which we are studying God’s word chronologically with the goal of building a biblical worldview (to have the mind of Christ! *Rom. 12:2, 1 Cor. 2:16*) to live well in an age which rejects biblical truth. I hope you will join us from January to March, Tuesdays at 6:00 PM. We are only a few weeks into this class now, and it has already stimulated great questions and conversation. This is a very interactive class—so if you have questions about scripture, this is most definitely the right place for you!

Sunday School

In 2022, the **Sunday School** had the astonishing blessing of studying fifteen books of the Bible (1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, James, 1-3 John, Proverbs, Philipians, Colossians, Ezra, Nehemiah, and soon to complete Esther)! We thank the Lord for the faithful teaching of His word. This coming year, the Sunday School will cover the books of Revelation, Ezekiel, Daniel, the Gospel of Mark, and the Psalms. We have seen wonderful growth in Sunday School attendance over the last twelve months. What a blessing! Please join us for Sunday School every Sunday at 9:15 in the library before the main service. You will be greatly edified by it!

Please also pray for **Children’s Sunday School**. We have many volunteers (though we can always use more), and we are now waiting on the Lord for children to teach. Pray that the children come and that the teachers are prepared and faithful to train them in God’s word.

Conference

Our annual **Fall Conferences** are an excellent opportunity to share God’s word with the community, as well as to bring great teachers to our local fellowship from around the country. We pray the Lord continues to enable us to host this conference and that He uses it for His glory!



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Last year, we were blessed to host **Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum of Ariel Ministries** for our second annual Tacoma Grace Fall Conference. He taught about Israel's past, present, and prophetic purpose, and delivered a Sunday morning message on The Law of Moses and the Law of Messiah. Dr. Fruchtenbaum was grateful for his warm reception—as am I—and he even asked to be invited back! Unless the Lord comes sooner, we will certainly invite him again in the future! Please continue to pray for Dr. Fruchtenbaum and Ariel Ministries.

Due to the success of last year's conference, we are planning a more ambitious conference this year. The **Third Annual Tacoma Grace Fall Conference** will host three speakers: **Dr. Dennis Rokser** (Duluth Bible Church, Grace & Truth Bible Church, Grace Institute for Biblical Studies), **Charles Jennings** (Layman's Online International Seminary), and **J. Morgan Arnold** (Bible Study Fellowship). The topic is **Salvation: Past, Present, and Prophetic**.

Please pray for these men, their ministries, their travel, and message preparation as they make their way to TGBC this September, and pray for the organizers as we make arrangements for the conference. If the Spirit leads you to help, there will be opportunities to host speakers or out-of-town guest attendees, as well as various volunteer jobs during the conference. If you would like to contribute financially to the expenses of the conference, you may designate your donation for Conference.

Bible Reading & Memory

One of the most fundamental needs for the growing believer (and we are all growing believers!) is the word of God—the very fuel that feeds the Spirit. Just as a healthy diet of food makes a healthy body, so a healthy diet of God's word makes a healthy spirit. Our Bible reading schedule—**Reading Fast & Slow**—is designed to give your spirit a healthy diet of God's word throughout the year. Whether you listen to an audio Bible or read it yourself, I encourage you to maintain a steady and healthy diet of God's word.

Reading

The "fast" column of the reading program is designed for **consumption**, while the "slow" column is designed for **meditation**. Keep a journal and write down your thoughts and questions; ask me or the other elders if you encounter something that you don't understand; share with your friends what you learn; and next year when you read these passages again, look back at how much you have learned year over year! It will be greatly encouraging to you to see your growth in real-time. If you are following a different schedule for reading, share what you are reading during fellowship times. We are reading the Bible together so we can grow together and encourage one another.

Memorizing

We are again and again encouraged in scripture to retain God's word in our mind. This year, we are memorizing twelve verses as a congregation about the significance and benefit of scripture. Meditate on these verses as you memorize them. It is one thing to memorize the words, it is another to memorize their meaning and adapt it into your thinking. The **Bible memory cards** are inscribed with a note from me about each verse's meaning and the reason for memorizing it.



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When you memorize these verses, don't forget to consider why you are memorizing them (*Psa. 119:11; Col. 3:16*). **The faith-rest life** is lived on the firm foundation of God's promises. Memorize those promises (and how to use them) and enjoy the transformation of your mind from anxiety and fear about the world around to peace and trust in God's faithfulness.

Outreach & Evangelism

As a church, we give financial support to several missionaries and local gospel-sharing organizations. Pray the Lord continues to supply the financial means to support our **foreign and domestic missionaries**. And let us not forget or become apathetic about our own call to witness. Sharing the gospel can be a terrifying thing—indeed, Satan wants you terrified to share your faith. He will make you scared by the often-inordinate response of unbelievers to hearing the gospel message (*2 Cor. 4:4*). Don't let it scare you off. God is working in all to lead them to faith in His Son.

As you grow mature in your faith through a greater understanding of God's word and as you build faith muscles, learning to trust God, know that **you are being trained for service**. That service may look different at various times in life depending on the need of the moment and your progress of growth, but one thing is sure: we must all be ready to share **the message of eternal life** which we also trusted for salvation (*1 Cor. 15:1-4; 2 Tim. 4:2; 1 Pet. 3:15*).

Be intentional about what you are learning. Be diligent, be discerning. We are growing for a purpose: to be useful in service to the Lord. Useless Christians are ultimately unsatisfied in life and do not experience the joy of spiritual maturity. Pray for the opportunity to share your faith and be faithful to do so when the opportunity arises.

This year our Fall Conference will add several **workshops** to the schedule. These are geared toward training believers to share the gospel clearly and to answer common doubts which unbelievers have about the Bible. There are many in our neighborhood and workplaces who need the gospel and who need fellowship. Pray that they receive the gospel and be willing to be the vessel through which God answers that prayer (*Lk. 10:2-3*).

Serving

I have often heard it said that, in a church body, 20% do 80% of the work. There are always more places to serve than there are servants. There are many people doing multiple jobs, and many jobs going undone in the church. Specifically, we are looking for someone to take on the role of **Treasurer**. Paul Pace has temporarily filled this position, along with many other duties. We are looking for more people who can run the **soundboard** (or are willing to be trained) and any **musicians/vocalists** for worship. If you can cook, paint, clean, organize, teach, or any number of talents and if you desire to serve, let us know!

If you are here, **this is your home**. Let us all enjoy the gift of serving one another as we grow side-by-side, honoring the Lord by walking in His will. There are rewards waiting for us in heaven for our service to Him on earth. So let us have the Apostle Paul's mind about service (*Phil. 2:14-18*). Let us, this year, grow ever stronger, so that we know the one who has saved us and all the joy of salvation before even we see Him in the clouds.



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Prayer Requests

Praying for one another is important. It is one way we can serve each other. Here are a few prayer requests which we can have for one another and for our fellowship in the church this year.

- Pray for all who teach the word in our fellowship, that the Spirit energizes us for the task of study, and that we have the clarity of mind and understanding to teach, and for all the classes which we will teach this year.
- Pray for the elders, that we continually seek the Lord's will and faithfully walk in it, and for the time, patience, and joy to serve well.
- Pray for our church building and property, and for Al and Paul who do most of the maintenance and improvement.
- Pray for the Lord to supply and uphold our finances, and that the elders are granted the wisdom to manage the gift of money, and that we are faithful to act in God's will.
- Pray for a permanent Treasurer to manage the church finances.
- Pray Ruth and Basanti as they lead worship, and that more join them.
- Pray for Vicki as she communicates with and encourages our missionaries.
- Pray for Susanna, Faith, and our other Sunday School volunteers, pray that the Lord sends students and that they are prepared and joyful to teach.
- Pray for our hope to offer VBS to our community, pray for clarity as we pursue this.
- Pray for our conference and conference speakers (Dennis Rokser, Charles Jennings, J. Morgan Arnold), and for those coordinating and serving.
- Pray for the evangelization of the neighborhood and all who hear our recorded content online, that they hear the clear gospel and respond to it by faith.
- Pray for the physical and spiritual health of each member of our fellowship.

For His glory,

PASTOR E DANE ROGERS

Tacoma Grace Bible Church

January 22, 2023