

God's Grace Community Church (GGCC)
State of the Church February 16, 2020
Pastor David J. Jensen

Jesus' Mercy (Love)
Changes Me, We &
the World



1. Cindy Del Hierro of Confluence Ministries recently said, "One of the most important spiritual practices we can do is to give thanks for the saints who went before us." We stand on the shoulders of others. Bev, Milt, Gertrude, Albert, Alfred and Louis, we all have them. Thank you to the paid and unpaid staff: Vikki Luce, Terry Luce, Ron Mitchell, Theresa Cope, Lois Autterson, Andrea Heshmati, Ed Edwards, Dave Edwards, Nancy Kronberg, Carolyn Hammack, Maureen Herzog and Pastor Milt Jensen. Thanks also to each of their spouses.
2. SOAP I urge each of you to consider doing the SOAP journal spiritual practice. This comes from New Hope Church in Hawaii lead by Pastor Wayne Cordeiro. It involves S-scripture, O-observation, A-application, P-Prayer. Tools to do this along with the staff and other leaders are on the website or talk to a staff member.
3. Dr James Qualbin said, "The church reformer Martin Luther of the 1500's was a 'streetfighter theologian.'" Luther took the mission of the church from a building into the city square and everywhere he went. We are in need of such a reformation today! People are not going to come through church building doors in droves. There is movement away from church to a kingdom model. Reggie McNeal is a modern-day reformer who has helped GGCC and other churches find their way into the street. To better understand this theology, I invite you to spend some time with Reggie on YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0rdu660WhhE>
4. The streaming ministry lead by Ron Mitchell has allowed our worship to leave the building and be a blessing in the Kingdom of God. Financially we have seen offerings from those who do not worship with us, rising steadily, which is another Kingdom trend. We are joined often by others when we serve with mission partners in the Kingdom. As we see the Holy Spirit moving us from a church model to a kingdom model we are blessed to be on the cutting edge of what God is up to in the world.
5. Our airplane logo which was inspired by Reggie McNeal's teachings reminds us that church is like the airport. You want to go to the airport to get to exciting places, but if you stay at the airport there is a problem. We are blessed with the resources of the Holy Spirit for great worship. May it inspire us to then hit the streets with God's love demonstrated through service.
6. In my February 12, 2020 devotion (you can find it on the GGCC website) I spoke to how I see God blending GGCC into the kingdom of God through the feeding of the 5000 story in Luke 9:12-17. As we have been invited to follow Christ into partnerships from Highlands Ranch/Rock Canyon High School to Denver/Confluence Ministries/Open Door Youth Gang Alternatives/The Gathering Place to Mississippi/Booneville Boys and Girls Club to Nicaragua/Love Light and Melody's effort on a trash dump outside Managua, with each of these partnerships as we and our partners pull resources out of our lunch pails God has grown the supply of gifts exponentially to feed and serve those in need. GGCC is woven into a Kingdom of God ministry that serves the world. We are not stuck in a rut keeping an institution alive.

7. We went through a transition this year from Claudia Larson who was on the staff for 15 years to Carolyn Hammack and Maureen Herzog. We celebrated Claudia's service and we did that well by anyone's measurement. Now God is up to something new and is using the gifts of Carolyn Hammack and Maureen Herzog to do a new thing in our midst.
8. I asked Dr Leonard Sweet once how to strategize for succession plans. He said we all need to be on the lookout for our own Timothy (successors). We are blessed to have Zach Herzog in seminary training to be a future leader in the larger church. Even Pastor Scott Seeke who was with us today is in our "missional community family tree" as one of our branches.
9. Financially we were blessed to end 2019 well. Thank you to everyone for your generosity. The general budget ended \$10,500 in the black. We are blessed to have a strong staff and the new budget will reflect raises for our staff. We are also set to dream and vision with our mission partners in 2020. Due to several staff serving in an "unpaid" status and savings we were afforded through recent transitions we can consider a faith stretch budget to be more generous with our partners in serving God's Kingdom! Over our 15-year history together we have offered to many of our partners a stability they would otherwise not be afforded. Inner city schools and people in poverty often live with the support system around them constantly changing. Your consistent presence with our partners has flipped a paradigm and ushered in fresh hope for the world! We also have the chance to impact the future church by offering financial support to our Seminarian Zach Herzog through a matching fund at Iliff Seminary, and the Treasury Team are proposing we do so.
10. 1 Peter 4:7-19 is a great reminder on how to live in mission. *A) Stay devoted to prayer. B) Love. C) Serve the homeless and the hungry. D) share generously with others remembering always God has given us all that we have. E) Remember when we suffer Christ is with us.* The model for being a missional community is still found in the teaching of 1 Peter.
11. Thank you to my family Dad Milt, Amanda, Cole, Dane, Kelly, Davis and Grandma Amy. God has gifted me with a wonderful blood family support system that I am genetically tied to. 54 years ago as I gazed into a coy pond in a funeral home in Council Bluffs, Iowa, Christ planted the seed in me to become a pastor. To my larger family of GGCC, you are the church I dreamed of one day getting to be a part in the Kingdom of God! I am very grateful for the opportunity to serve alongside you.