

The background of the poster features a large, semi-circular stained glass window with various colored panes (blue, yellow, red, orange, white, and green) separated by black lead lines. Surrounding the window are several solid-colored circles in yellow, orange, and blue. The title text is centered in a dark blue horizontal band.

# SPRING 2025 REPORTING COUNCIL



Grantham  
Church  
BRETHREN IN CHRIST

Sunday, April 27th  
[granthamchurch.org/council](https://granthamchurch.org/council)

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the Grantham Church's Spring 2025 Reporting Council, our annual meeting where we share with each other how God has been at work in, and has been working through, your brothers and sisters in this Congregation.

Our common vision is to love and worship God and disciple people in Christ, the Scriptures, and the Spirit's power to radically love our neighbors and our world. We are joined together in planning, living, and working each day to be a Congregation that is leading people to the God who looks like Jesus.

Your Church leadership — Church Board and its committees, the Pastoral Staff, and the Commissions — submit this report to you with gratitude to God for all of you and for the ministries that we all participated in with the Spirit's leading in 2024. The reports in this booklet describe the life of our congregation during 2024, but it cannot capture the breadth of everything that happened. The glory for what is recorded here belongs to God, and we rely on Him completely for what we hope to undertake in 2025.

## **GRANTHAM CHURCH BOARD**

In 2024, the Grantham Church Board was Senior Pastor David Flowers, Rachel Jasitt, Patti Hess, Ken Martin, James Smiley (Board Vice Chair), Pam Thomas (Board Secretary), Phil Thuma (Church Treasurer), John Yeatts, and Brian Zweischer (Board Chair).

Church Board serves as the fiduciary of you, the Congregation. We oversee, and provide for the administration of, all aspects of Church operations and Congregational life. We are a leadership board that works in concert with our Senior Pastor David Flowers, Discipleship Pastor Melissa Lowther, and Worship Pastor Dave Perry to develop a strategic direction and a vision for our Congregation, and then live into that vision. We organize and run the annual council meetings, oversee and approve budget and financial decisions, and establish or approve policies for the church.

Among the many details that Church Board attended to in 2024, we:

- Drafted revisions to update and refresh our Church Governance Plan which were approved by Church Council in November 2024.
- Approved the creation of ad hoc committee called the Congregational Learning Community that will prayerfully develop potential avenues for future ministries to be considered by the congregation, which will be funded by a grant from the Lilly Endowment.
- Approved a memorandum of understanding with One80 Ministries.
- Decided to return to holding most of our meetings in-person in 2025.
- Oversaw budgetary matters including the church's annual budget and financial items that inevitably arise from time-to-time.
- Conducted our two annual Church council meetings in April and November.

## TREASURER AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

**Members:** Phil Thuma (chair), Jim Smiley (secretary), Lynn Brown, Ken Martin, Lisa Sechrist, Roger Johnson, Matt Haar, and Linda Worman (Staff Representative).

**Weekly counting team:** Lynn Brown, Patty Beardsley, Roger Johnson.

**Purpose:** To provide advice, counsel and guidance on the financial aspects of the church, including human resources practices.

The Finance Committee continues to meet monthly and review the financial reports as prepared from the Quickbooks accounting software. It closely monitors income and expenses of all departments for the council-approved General Fund budget, which is the annual operating budget for the church.

Below is the un-audited report for General Fund income and expenses in 2024. The annual external audit by Hamilton and Musser will be carried out in May 2025 to verify these figures.

	2024 Actual	2024 Budget	Variance	% utilized (of 100% expected)
<b>INCOME</b>				
Unrestricted Contributions	871,987	862,342	9,645	101.1%
Misc Income	736	0	736	
Restricted Contributions	422	0	422	
Program Revenue	5,581	2,500	3,081	223.2%
Interest	5,785	2,250	3,535	257.1%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>884,511</b>	<b>867,092</b>	<b>17,419</b>	<b>102.0%</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>850,334</b>	<b>867,092</b>	<b>(16,758)</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>Preliminary Income/Expenses</b>	<b>34,177</b>			

The November 2024 Church Council approved a significant 15% increase in the General Fund budget for 2025. We have noted that in the first quarter of 2025 General Fund actual giving has lagged behind our expected income, though in recent weeks this gap has improved somewhat. Expenses year to date (as of March 31) remain close to the actual income. See chart below.

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	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	YTD Variance	Annual Budget
<b>INCOME</b>				
Unrestricted Contributions	\$213,482	244,436	(30,954)	991,325
Misc Income	\$933			
Program Revenue / Facility Use	\$1,310	1,112	198	4,510
Interest	\$1,565	1,356	209	5,500
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$217,290</b>	<b>246,905</b>	<b>(30,547)</b>	<b>1,001,335</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$216,866</b>	<b>246,905</b>	<b>(30,038)</b>	<b>1,001,335</b>
<b>Preliminary Income/Expenses</b>	<b>\$424</b>			

The Finance Committee appreciates the generous financial support of many congregants, and we praise God that Grantham Church remains in solid financial shape.

## MINISTRY SUPPORT COMMITTEE

**Committee Members:** Susan Bailey (secretary), Rebekah Basinger (chair), Mary Jane Fair, David Flowers (staff representative), Patti Hess, Douglas Martin, Rachel Moury, Gareth Owen.

### Mission and Methods

The Ministry Support Committee serves Grantham Church in the role of development and advocacy. We support the ministries at Grantham Church by encouraging and celebrating giving time, expertise, and finances. We also respond to requests by the pastoral staff and/or church board to provide direction and input on a variety of items affecting the congregation in the area of stewardship and fiscal support.

To these ends, the Ministry Support Committee:

- Shares the impact of our congregation's generosity through engaging stories using various delivery mechanisms and channels, including personal testimonies.
- Encourages generosity of time and talent by telling the stories of volunteers within the church and how they've grown in faith through their service.

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- Promotes generosity as a form of discipleship (in consultation with the discipleship pastor) with learning opportunities that enhance congregants' financial literacy.
- Provides counsel to special giving campaigns, as they may arise.

### **Activities (April 2024 – April 2025):**

- **Continued “Our Gifts at Work” messaging** as a means of alerting the congregation to the mission impact of our tithes and offerings as given through Grantham Church. The messages were communicated through the Pastor’s Email, verbally by the pastors or others during worship services, and with posters on the Ministry Support Committee’s bulletin board.
- **Themes explored during the past 12 months:** Landscaping, VBS, BIC General Assembly, fellowship meals, Mennonite Central Committee (Gaza and Ukraine), BIC World Missions, Children’s Ministries, Gospel Coalition, and refugee resettlement.
- **Added to the “Service Spotlight” series**, highlighting contributions of volunteers working in various ministry roles within the church. In addition to short essays in poster form describing each volunteer’s work, with the assistance of Abby Donoval (April – August 2024) and Gareth Owen (October 2024 – Present), we’ve been able to include short videos of the volunteers talking about their service and the impact on their faith.
- **Individuals highlighted during the past 12 months:** Donna Bert, Abby Donavoll, Jan Hess, and Patti Hess
- **Proposed the 5th Sunday Initiative** as a means for highlighting and encouraging engagement with Grantham’s four Ministry Partners. The overarching goal of the 5th Sunday Initiative is to name and claim the activities of specific individuals within the congregation as us, Grantham Church, carrying the love of Jesus into surrounding communities and beyond. The pilot year began with Paxton Ministries in March, to be followed by One80 Ministries in June, MCC in August, and New Hope Ministries in November. Based on an evaluation at year-end, Church Board will determine if the Initiative will be continued into a second year.



In all these ways and more, we seek to support the ministries at Grantham Church by encouraging and celebrating giving in the forms of time, treasure and talent. We are grateful and happy to do so. Thank you.

## **PROPERTY AND FACILITIES COMMITTEE**

The Property and Facilities Commission oversees and provides for the proper stewardship, upkeep, maintenance, construction, purchase, repair, and use of the buildings, fixtures, other physical structures, and land of the Church including vehicles and equipment owned, operated, or used by the Church.

**Committee Members:** Duane Asper (secretary), Donna Bert, Derek Boyce (staff), Heidi Curry, Les Engle, Denny Mann, Ken Martin (chair), Tom Rudy, Chris Young.

**Personnel:** We were blessed to have the part time assistance of Tim Lyne to help manage our facilities during 2024. The Committee and the Church Board are deeply grateful to all of Tim's time and effort to help care for our facilities and for all of us. Starting in January 2025, Derek Boyce assumed the fulltime position of Director of Operations. He has already identified cost savings initiatives and is helpful in scheduling and maintaining our building. Upon the retirement of Doug James, Mike Ryan assumed the role of Head Custodian and is helping assure our facilities are cleaned and ready for daily uses.

**Major Initiatives for 2025:** We plan to complete conversion of all our lighting to LED. Safety continues to be important as we consider installing electronic door locks at strategic locations. We are fortunate to have facilities which can be used by Ignite Church, our Ministry Partners, and the community. We will review our rental rates and fees to ensure that we are covering our operating costs.

**During 2024, we:**

- Converted the heating system from heating oil to natural gas, and the Church is already realizing savings on our utility bills.
- Completed roof repairs as needed.
- Removed an oil tank and completed close-out documentation.
- Replaced Fellowship Hall HVAC equipment.
- Removed blown-over trees on the north bank.
- Converted parking lot lights to LED lighting.

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- Performed proactive maintenance and plantings at detention pond.
- Relocated AED units with signage.
- Replaced kitchen steamer.
- Installed water treatment system for boilers.
- Began replacement of Fellowship Hall chairs.

### **Projects we plan to undertake in 2025 (and maybe later):**

- Replace our aging fire alarm system.
- Install electronic locks on six exterior doors.
- Replace the Fellowship Hall roof and other areas with original shingles.
- Replace the Fellowship Hall and C8-12 floors.
- Plant grass on detention pond bank.
- Crack fill and reseal parking lot.
- Consider installation of cameras in strategic locations.

We recognize that this future “to do” list is expansive and expensive. These initiatives will require research, discussion, and patience. They may take multiple years to complete.

### **Notes of Thanks and appreciation:**

- The members of the PFC are to be applauded for their management suggestions along with their hard work and countless volunteer hours—thank you!
- Thank you to all the volunteers from our congregation who open the church each Sunday morning and who ensures our property is properly closed each evening.
- Thank you to the volunteers who mulch and trim the property and to the weekly mowing crew.
- Thanks to those who participate in our annual work days.
- Thank you to the congregation members who perform in-house repairs to our equipment and building interior that save us the cost of many hours electrical, plumbing, and repairs that would otherwise have to be performed by contractors.
- We appreciate your reports of malfunctioning equipment and/or unauthorized users on our property.
- We appreciate the nightly property checks by the Messiah University Safety Department.

The interest and response from so many in our congregation is heartwarming — we are blessed!

## **CARE TEAMS**

The Care Teams Ministry is responsible for meeting certain needs of the congregation as well as others to whom we become aware of. During the 2024/25 reporting year, the Care Team Ministry continued ministry with the nine care teams that were finalized two years ago. Accomplishments for the reporting cycle were as follows. Where pertinent, future initiatives are included.

### **Baptism Team (Duane Asper, Coordinator)**

We had three baptism services in 2024:

#### **August 18, 2024 (Yellow Breeches Creek)**

Baptism Candidates: Matt Godshall, Claire Reitnour, Rachel Owen, Pay Johnson, Landon Mark, Dane Mark, Lydia Meade, and Elliot Meade.

#### **November 24, 2024 (Church Sanctuary)**

Baptism Candidates: Julie Hoffner and Declan Basinger

#### **March 23, 2025 (Church Sanctuary)**

Baptism Candidates: Simon Kyllonen and Nate Keily

### **Communion Team (Susan Felix, Coordinator)**

Communion is typically served the first Sunday of the month. Twice a year it is served on the second Sunday instead. At Grantham Church 10 fellow believers serve communion alongside the pastors each month. This allows for a total of 120 opportunities to serve communion each year. To prepare for communion, Susan usually asks people in the congregation to serve communion, and they meet with Pastor David for instructions before the service. In 2024, 57 different people served communion. Additionally, 2-3 people prepare for and clean up afterward. Communion Supply costs are budgeted for under the Congregational Care (but not from the Benevolence Fund). In 2024 we paid \$251.34 for communion

supplies, and so far in 2025 we have paid \$145.94. The approved budget for for communion supplies for 2025 is \$500.

**Future:** We will continue to provide the opportunity to serve communion to many in our congregation. Susan coordinates the schedule and is assembling a team of people willing to serve communion and periodically adds additional people so that more people can experience serving in this way. There are just a handful of people who help prepare for and cleanup after communion, and Susan is happy to invite others to serve the congregation this way. Please contact her either in person or at [sfelix17019@gmail.com](mailto:sfelix17019@gmail.com) if you would like to be included.

### **Maundy Thursday Service Team (Jonathan and Becky Owen, Coordinators)**

A fuller overview can be provided at the Council meeting, but the 2025 Maundy Thursday service included feet washing, communion, and a devotional time.

### **Transportation Team (Elaine Thuma, Coordinator)**

Twelve 12 people serve on the transportation team. In the last year we have been active as follows:

- For 4 GBIC congregants - transportation (ongoing) to and from Sunday services.
- For 1 GBIC congregant- transportation to and from a medical procedure.
- For 2 neighbors (a Messiah University student; and, an acquaintance of a GBIC member) we provided transportation to and from work for several weeks.

Future - Many of our team members are also employed so they have work schedules as well as helping out when they can. The more people we have on the team the better for working around those “unadjustable” schedules. If there is anyone in the congregation (even if you are not yet officially members) who would like to be involved in this way please contact Elaine ([elaine.thuma@gmail.com](mailto:elaine.thuma@gmail.com)) or find her after a Sunday service. The team mostly operates by using a “Sign up” system – whereby each person can choose the date(s) which suits her/him.

### **Meals Team (Jan Hess, Coordinator)**

Since April, 2024, the Take Them a Meal team has provided meals for 12 different families. Depending on the case, meals are provided 3 times a week for 2-3 weeks. The recipients are always very grateful and appreciate the kindness- AND THE FOOD - of those who prepare and deliver!

**Future:** There are about 51 folks who have signed up to be contacted when the need arises. However, only the same 14-15 folks sign up to actually provide meals. A survey will be sent out shortly to determine if folks would like to continue to be on the email distribution list.

### **Contact/Visitation Team (Marisa George, Coordinator)**

Procedures were put in place for the care team as well as the responsibilities for the team coordinator and team members. All contacts/visits are being documented on a Google Doc developed by church staff. Team members can connect with people via calling, emails, or actual visits. Pastor David updates the Google Doc listing of people who could use visits, drawing on information collected from the Prayer Chain, known hospital listings, and homebound people. Pastor David will continue to update the Google Doc as he becomes aware of people needing to be reached out to.

Contact cards were made in the church office and are utilized when visiting people. The card reflects the date of the visit, the individual that conducted the visit and a call back number for the care team member. Those visited will then have a method to contact the care team member with any additional information or needs.

During the course of the last twelve months, there were thirty-three contacts/visits.

**Future:** Currently, there are only five active members outside of church staff on this combined team. There is a need to have more people reach out to the number of folks listed on the Google Doc sheet. If anybody is interested in joining this team, please contact Marisa at [ciaorisa@comcast.net](mailto:ciaorisa@comcast.net).

### **Prayer Chain (Tom George, Coordinator)**

Currently we have 212 individuals participating in the Grantham Prayer Chain. Over the course of the last year there were approximately 100-125 requests that were sent out for prayer. We are grateful for everyone who prayed for these concerns.

In addition to the prayer chain, we have a weekend prayer listing that is sent out to interested parties. This is composed of prayer chain requests as well as others brought to Tom's attention. Currently, about 110 email addresses receive this weekly listing. If anyone is interested in receiving this weekly prayer listing, please contact Tom at [tgjets@comcast.net](mailto:tgjets@comcast.net).

### **Moving Team (Duane Asper, Coordinator)**

There were 5 individuals/family units that we helped this past year. This was up from last year but down from previous years when this team was involved in 8-10 moves per year.

### **Benevolence Fund (Tom George, Coordinator, in conjunction with Pastor David and Phil Thuma)**

During the period April 1, 2024 through March 31, 2025 the Benevolence Fund received donations of \$1,140.36 and paid out a total of \$4,357.56 in benevolence assistance:

- \$1,040 (24%) was for counseling sessions.
- \$155.88 (4%) was for moving cost assistance.
- \$1,689.56 (39%) for rental assistance.
- \$318.92 (7%) was for car insurance.
- \$360.00 (8%) was for a car payment.
- \$293.00 (7%) was for credit card debt.
- \$500.00 (11%) was a donation to a refugee family.

The current remaining balance in the Benevolence Fund is \$4,677.13.

If anyone would like to donate to the Benevolence Fund ministry, you can place your contribution marked for the Benevolence Fund in the offering plate on Sunday morning or you may give online.

## **CHILDREN'S MINISTRY COMMISSION**

The Children's Ministry Commission is Patty Beardsley, Melissa Cohen, Libby Coldsmith, Denise Fogelsanger, Julie Hoffner, Beth Huffnagle, Dawn Isley, and

Sally (Mark) Young. We meet every other month to discuss, plan, and assess commission-sponsored events, as well as how we can better serve the ongoing children's ministry program.

The Children's Ministry provides weekly classes during Learning Communities for children from birth through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. At 10 a.m. each Sunday, the children have choir practice. Children in kindergarten through 5th grade may leave the church service at 11 a.m. to attend Kids' Own Worship. Nursery and pre-school ministry classes are offered during the worship service. Volunteers are instrumental in all areas weekly.

### **Outreach Events:**

- **Sing and Play** has been offered at Grantham for 19 years, usually 2 sessions on Friday mornings. These are held September – December, and January – March. We had around 90 children each week in two time slots. The children range in age from 1 to 5 years. We have had 141 families register throughout the 24-25 season. Only four families are from our congregation. A special thank you goes to Beth Huffnagle for leading this event, and to all of the volunteers who set-up the day prior, participate during Sing and Play, and clean-up after each event.
- **Vacation Bible School (VBS)** was held June 17-21. The theme was Camp Firelight: a Summer Camp Adventure with God and was attended by 101 students who had completed kindergarten through 5th grade. 55 volunteers supported us during VBS week.
- **Aroma Sports Camp** is held each year during the week after VBS. 75 children and 11 Messiah students who run the camp were in attendance. Ten of the children were from our own congregation. Denise was able to connect with several of the children who attended as well as a couple of the adult members/volunteers who led the camp.
- **Trunks and Treats** was held on October 27. We saw almost 350 children plus their families for the trunk area, some folks just for the band and fellowship. It was a great community event with many sharing their email to receive future event information. 13 Bibles were given away.
- **A Night in Bethlehem** was the theme for our children's Christmas program. This family Christmas event, held on December 13, was attended by many of our church families and some from the community. We had 22 volunteers who acted as hosts to various trade tents for families to try activities that would have occurred during Jesus' birth time

in Bethlehem. We also had artisans showing how they would have done carpentry, wool and flax carding and spinning.

- **Egg Hunt** was held on April 19, 2025. A thank you goes to all those families that filled eggs prior to the event as well as the volunteers on that day.
- **Moms Together** meets on the first Wednesday of each month. A guest speaker discusses a topic relevant to new moms and childcare is provided. Three new moms from other churches have joined our group. There is definite need for moms to have the opportunity to meet with and support other stay at home moms.

Our church family gained 11 new babies this year. We gave Bibles to First and Fifth graders during a service in June and offered Back Pack Blessings during a worship service in August for all those returning to school. During the winter months some of our third – fifth graders have been attending a Wednesday evening program on the Sermon on the Mount, focusing on the Beatitudes.

I would like to thank the many, many volunteers we have ministering to our children. Every Sunday there are at least 25 volunteers who make the children's ministry possible. These volunteers spend countless hours enriching the lives of our children. If you feel led to serve in this area, please contact me. Your help is greatly appreciated.

## **DISCIPLESHIP COMMISSION**

**Purpose:** To encourage and equip disciples of Jesus to make other disciples by providing opportunities and resources to grow in trust in and obedience to Jesus.

**Members:** Edie Asbury, Angela Hare (secretary), Katie Logan, Melissa Lowther (staff), Christian Pavlovich, Matt Reitnour (chair beginning May 2025), Rich Stuebing (chair through April 2025)

### **Ongoing Activities in 2024 and Early 2025:**

- **Discipleship Culture:** The Commission continues to consider the results of the 2023 Disciple Survey and find ways to address areas of growth. We had conversations regarding the stages of discipleship and programs we have in place that help people grow as disciples. Our Ministry Staff



will continue to consider and clarify Grantham Church's discipleship pathway in 2025.

- **Adult Learning Communities (LCs):** Four ongoing LCs continue to have good involvement and are places where disciples of Jesus can go deeper in their faith with others. Thank you to our regular LC leaders/teachers: Randy & Rebekah Basinger, Jason & Leah Clarke, MJ Fair, Angela Hare, Rachael Jasitt, Ken & Yvonne Martin, Glen Pierce, Rich Stuebing, and John Yeatts. In the Summer 2024, the Peace & Social Justice Commission sponsored an 8-week discussion on "Just Politics" leading up to the November elections. In January 2025, we held a combined LC on "Spiritual Practices," attempting to facilitate intergenerational conversation and interaction.
- **Small Groups:** Six groups meet consistently (a new group began Fall 2024), most of which process the sermons and focus on application and caring for one another. Thank you to our regular small group leaders/facilitators: Lynn Brown, Bob & Susan Felix, Wayne & Rosemary Graffius, Dave Hudson, Pam Thomas, and Phil & Elaine Thuma. Another new small group will begin in May 2025. During the "We the Church" series in Winter 2025, about 20% of the adults in our congregation participated in small groups to discuss and apply what we learned about living on Jesus' mission where we live, learn, work, and play.
- **Intentional Discipleship Groups (IDGs):** Five IDGs (groups of three to four people) met weekly in 2024 to pursue Scripture-fueled obedience to Jesus, in an open and honest community, for the sake of their neighbors. Several participants will invite others into new IDGs with our third generation of groups beginning in the spring 2025.
- **Together on the Journey:** Six meetings in the Fall 2023-Spring 2024 gathered people in similar vocations to discuss what it looks like to live as Christians in their workplaces. Five meetings in the Fall 2025 gathered people within their general neighborhoods to discuss how to "BLESS" their neighbors.
- **College ministry:** We continue to see an increase in Messiah students regularly attending our worship services. A College Ministry Team was re-envisioned in 2024, led by Katie Logan with participants Samantha Haar, Roger Johnson, Ann and Ryan Mark, and Joy Meade. Several student lunches provided space for fellowship and discussion. Students received encouragement bags at the start and end of each semester. A new "student central" table was established near the entrance many students use to better connect with them.

- **Grandmothers in Prayer** continues to be a place of support and prayer for grandmothers seeking to influence their grandchildren with the love of Christ. Various leaders have facilitated discussions around Philip Yancey's book on prayer. Thank you to Velma Yoder who coordinates this group.
- **Bible Studies:** The men's Bible study that meets on Fridays at 6:45 AM studied 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus and are currently in the book of 1 Samuel. About 10 men participate on average. Thank you to leader Rich Stuebing.
- **Library:** Due to generous donations in loving memory of Bob Ives (former Grantham Church pastor), we were able to make several aesthetic and resource upgrades to the church library, with an open house reception in February 2024. Librarian Edie Asbury reports an increase in the number of children's books being checked out since the addition of an attractive children's nook. The library's annual reading challenge in 2024 focused on "God's Guidance" and continues in 2025 on the topic "Hope in the Lord."
- **Regional Prayer Guide:** A working group published a prayer guide focused on our local context to help our congregation to grow our burden for the community around us. Three local churches purchased copies for their members. We worked through the prayer guide as a congregation in January 2025, during a month of prayer for our community. Thank you to the organizing team and lead contributors: Sarah Becking, Dave Howell, Carmen Williams, and Pastor Melissa.

We are grateful for how God is growing us as disciples!

## **MISSIONS AND MULTICULTURAL MINISTRY COMMISSION**

The purpose of the Missions & Multi-Cultural Ministry Commission is to offer various means of support to BIC U.S. World Missions and our own designated missionaries, keep Grantham Church informed of ways that we can learn and share in their ministry, support refugees and local multicultural communities, and present multi-cultural ministry opportunities for congregants to serve both domestically and globally through our denomination's mission agency.

**Members:** Kathy Stuebing, Phil Thuma, David Flowers, Ruth Bert, Esther Hess, and Jonathan Owen (chair).

## **Global Missions Awareness (2024)**

Vicky Landis, Mobilization Administrator for BIC US World Missions shared about ministry opportunities in Dearborn, MI in the January 21 service and afterward at a Lunch and Learn. On May 5, B. and M.B. spoke briefly in the service about their ministry in Spain and then shared more deeply in a Lunch and Learn afterward. This allowed them to share more openly than would be possible in a livestreamed service.

Becky and Micah Owen, as well as Seth Derliunas, took part in a short-term trip to Dearborn, MI organized by BIC US World Missions in partnership with a local organization. They helped host English and math camps for refugee children, many of whom have never encountered Christians before. The local organization builds relationship year-round with families and is open about their Christian faith.

Missions Sunday (November 17, 2024) focused on God's work among Nepali & Bhutanese people in both Nepal and Pennsylvania. We worshipped with Ignite Church with a combined team of musicians and a message from Pastor Royal Rai. Our offering (\$18,422 total) supported Ignite Church and the BIC US World Missions SPICE child sponsorship program in Nepal and India. A learning community addressed the Nepali BIC and SPICE.

## **Global Worker Support**

Grantham gives \$6000 annually for the ongoing support of:

- Yosuel and Jacquie Medina (evangelism, church planting, and compassion work in Ecuador)
- B. and M.B. (hospitality, evangelism, and church planting in Spain)
- Beth and Ben Stuebing Adams (Christian Health Service Corps in Malawi).

Information is available at the church office and welcome centers about how Grantham supports missionaries through our regular offering, how individuals can give directly through BIC US World Missions, and other ways of giving to specific projects or missionaries.

## **Local Multicultural + Refugee Support**

In view of the magnitude of the current situation regarding refugees, the commission is encouraged by the work of the Love in Action group, those from Grantham who have volunteered in various ways, and the coordination being done through The Meeting House Dillsburg.

### **Coming Up in 2025:**

- Applications are due May 1 for those interested in joining one of the BIC teams serving this August in English and math camps in Dearborn, MI. (See <https://bicus.org/missions/get-involved/short-term-opportunities/>).
- Missions Sunday is scheduled for November 16.

### **Please pray for:**

- The missionaries and families we support (see the list above).
- That each of us would take the opportunities God gives us to share Jesus' love, in words and in deeds, with people around us—and to include people from other cultures in our efforts to love others in the way of Christ.
- That God would continue to call and prepare people to serve in ministry here and abroad.

## **PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMISSION**

**Members:** Brantley Gasaway (Chair), Chris Becking, Harriet Sider Bicksler, Dennis Boyle, David Flowers, Dave Howell, Kara McKinney, Rich Stuebing

### **Mission Statement and Focus**

The purpose of the Peace & Social Justice Commission is to help educate, inform, and empower Grantham Church to address injustice without mixing the gospel with partisan politics. We exist to help create a church culture that values peace and justice in the way of Jesus. We believe that the gospel is about the redemption of people's souls and bodies, as well as the redemption of political, economic, and ecological systems. And under Pastor David's leadership, we have a small team of congregants who encourages and inspires Grantham to live into

that vision. We meet regularly to discuss current events, plan future events, pray, and respond to needs.

## **Activities in 2024**

- The commission produced a *PeaceMatters* newsletter in March 2024.
- Peace Sunday, April 7, 2024: The theme, Pursuing Peace in Israel & Palestine, gave attention to the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine (Gaza); speakers were Bshara Nasaar and Daryl Byler; our offering went to support Mennonite Central Committee's peace-building efforts in Israel & Palestine and help the MCC Thrift Shop start-up in our area. Our ingathering offering goal was \$10,000. We received a total of \$8,357.49.
- Summer Learning Community – in June and July we used "For the Health of the Nation" video and discussion material to help us approach political issues as disciples of Jesus.
- The After Party Video Series & Class Discussion – in October we used "The After Party" material for a 6-week class leading up to the election. The After Party helped us to navigate that time as followers of Jesus and was very much in keeping with the Third Way focus of Grantham Church. We had anywhere between 20-25 people for each session (including a few via Zoom), and it proved to be helpful for those in attendance.

Finally, the work of the Peace and Social Justice Commission has been critical in keeping the needs of our community and the world before our congregation, and in cultivating and promoting peace, Third Way culture, and Christ's Kingdom vision in and through Grantham Church. In addition to our focus on Anabaptism: The Way of Peace (Peace Sunday 2025), we will continue to help our congregation respond to justice issues as they arise in the coming year.

If you have questions or would like to join our commission, please talk to Pastor David Flowers.

## **SERVICE AND OUTREACH COMMISSION**

Purpose: to empower and equip followers of Jesus to live as servants of Christ on everyday mission to lead others to the God who looks like Jesus. We seek to do this by providing opportunities for service in our community; preparing disciples of Christ to share their faith where they live, learn, work, and play; and partnering

with like-minded organizations to meet needs, provide relief, and promote restoration.

**Members:** Patti Hess, Dave Howell (chair), Julia Johnson , Melissa Lowther (staff), Kelly Martin (secretary), and Marc Moure.

## **Ministry Partner Support**

One of the major roles of our commission is to be liaisons with Grantham Church's four ministry partners. In 2024-2025, we saw God working through these ministries to bless those in our local community and around the world. We were glad to partner in the following ways:

### **Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)**

- An intergenerational group of almost 50 attenders and friends of Grantham Church continue to make quilted comforters which MCC distributes to individuals and families as part of disaster relief efforts. In 2024, the Comforter Crew averaged 5 comforters per week for a total of 250. In 2025, they surpassed 1000 comforters made since they began in 2019. Thank you to Geoff Isley for spearheading these efforts.
- Our congregation collected materials to donate 50 school kits in 2024. Kits were assembled by the Seibert family and delivered by Jack & Marilyn Wolgemuth.
- Grantham Church partnered with several other local churches to launch Thrift on Purpose, a new thrift store in Mechanicsburg whose proceeds benefit MCC. Thank you to Jodie Smiley who is a board member and directed donation and volunteer recruitment efforts at Grantham, as well as Randy and Rebekah Basinger who were on the start-up committee to found the store and continue to volunteer weekly. At least a dozen people from Grantham Church volunteer at the thrift store regularly. Our youth group also served at Thrift on Purpose once in 2025.
- Our congregation collected \$2580 in 2025 for My Coins Count to fund MCC's global food initiatives.
- Approximately 100 or more attenders of Grantham Church volunteered at, contributed to, and attended the Pennsylvania Relief Sale on April 4-5, 2025. Thank you to Dave Hudson and Ken and Yvonne Martin who are Board Members and help to coordinate this statewide event.

## **New Hope Ministries**

- During our annual Thanksgiving collection in 2024, we collected 126 containers of French fried onions.
- We donated \$250 worth of items for the Christmas blessing shop where those in need can find gifts for their families.
- At least a half-dozen people from Grantham Church serve regularly at the Mechanicsburg and Dillsburg locations in the food pantry, teaching classes, and more, not including those who help with periodic events.

## **One80 Ministries**

- We partner with ONE80 twice/month to host Fellowship Meals after our Sunday services where anyone is welcome to a free meal. Thank you to Dawn Isley for her coordination of these meals and many volunteers.
- In July 2024, we collected enough fabric softener for 100 small bottles to be distributed to those in need in our local community.
- We hosted the ONE80 Annual Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser on April 6, 2025.
- Several attenders of Grantham Church come through the ministry of ONE80, seven of whom were baptized in 2024 and early 2025!
- At least 20 Grantham Church attenders volunteer regularly at ONE80, not including many who help with periodic events and initiatives.

## **Paxton Ministries**

- Grantham Church participated in three Days of Service efforts (February, June, September) during which volunteers served meals, led activities, helped with clean-up projects, and more. In 2024, 54 volunteers helped across the three days and we received much positive feedback from Paxton staff and residents appreciating our efforts.
- We contributed \$250 worth of items at Christmastime 2024 to re-stock everyday supplies for Paxton's residents.
- In March 2025, we highlighted Paxton Ministries as our first "5th Sunday Initiative" focus through prayer, sharing information, and collecting personal care items. Residents and staff of Paxton joined our worship service and fellowship meal on March 16. Throughout the month, our congregation gave \$1701 towards Paxton's ministries, as well as 49 body washes, 92 deodorants, 41 shampoos, 17 conditioners, 171 pairs of disposable underwear, 350 disposable under pads, 4 nail clipper sets,

4 nail files, 1 toothpaste and 1 toothbrush, which can be used by their residents.

- At least a half-dozen people from Grantham Church serve regularly at Paxton by serving meals, hosting a monthly tea, meeting with a buddy, and more, not including many who help with periodic events.

## **Other Activities in 2024 and Early 2025**

- We contributed \$300 toward Mechanicsburg Community Day's kid zone (July 2024).
- For the second year, we hosted games at the Upper Allen Fall Festival (Sept 2024) and had the opportunity to connect with hundreds of local children and families.
- We added Keystone Family Alliance as a "Ministry Friend" in November 2024. This ministry connects churches with needs related to foster care and adoption in our region.
- A working group published a prayer guide focused on our local context to help our congregation to grow our burden for the community around us. Three local churches purchased copies for their members. We worked through the prayer guide as a congregation in January 2025, during a month of prayer for our community. Thank you to the organizing team and lead contributors: Sarah Becking, Dave Howell, Carmen Williams, and Pastor Melissa.
- We are supporting ongoing efforts to help our congregation build a "toolkit" for sharing our faith. In the Spring 2024, there were several Together on the Journey meet-ups focused on vocations and considering how we live as Christians in our workplaces, then meet-ups in Fall 2024 were within neighborhoods about how we can bless our neighbors. In 2025, after receiving feedback from the "We the Church" series, we will continue to consider how to better equip our congregation in this area. One area of consideration will be launching an Alpha (exploring Christianity) group in 2025.

May God continue to use us as servant missionaries to point others to the God who looks like Jesus!



## YOUTH COMMISSION

### What does the Youth Commission do?

We study the Bible, discuss, play, pray, serve, and eat!

#### Fall '24-Spring '25 Main meeting times:

- Learning Community: We've been studying the Bible from Creation to Christ using passages outlined on NOVO.org. Our goal is to dig deeper into familiar (and not so familiar) stories and themes in the Bible while also teaching students how to study the Bible using quality resources themselves.
- EYG (Evening Youth Group): We studied Ephesians in the fall and the parables of Jesus in the spring.

**Retreats & Camp:** Middle schoolers (9) and high schoolers (2) attended Camp Hebron winter youth retreat in early January. Both high school attendees will also be serving on summer staff this year, one for 3 weeks, the other for the whole summer camp season!

**Service Engagement:** Paxton Ministries, One80, Trunk/Treat, Egg Hunt, nursery, projection, worship team, VBS. A new partnership this year has been with Salvation Army in Carlisle. One of our families regularly supports the soup kitchen there and we asked if we could come along to help, too! We've sent 2 teams of 6 each semester. This has been a good time of learning, serving, and bonding. Another new partnership through MCC is Thrift on Purpose where youth helped with cleaning and donation sorting. Many of us also support it financially by shopping after serving 😊.

**Play:** We love to play! This year we bought one of our favorite games, 9 Square in the Air!

**Pool Party:** Thanks to the Hudsons for hosting the youth's year-end pool party!

## **Dinners:**

- Prayer Partners – support youth all year & meet up for a few planned events
- Mechanicsburg Community Church (MCC) - We invited another small neighboring youth group to have dinner with us and play games. It was interesting for the youth to see familiar faces (from school) in a different setting (church).
- Seder Meal – Last year we invited the Youth Commission members to join us for a Seder Meal. This year we had the church staff join us!

**Wednesday Nights:** A group of around 7 boys came together for a 7-week Bible study called He's Where the Joy Is by Tara Leigh Cobble. Shout out to Joe Sell who helped Chrissy lead this group.

**Spudtacular:** Our 3rd Annual talent/sharing event was a success. Thank you for supporting our youth with your presence and contributions to support kids going to camp. A total of more than \$1,000 was raised for the Campership fund.

**June book study:** A wide variety of attendees – youth, parents, parents of elementary children, adults with no children – came together to read and discuss God's Smuggler about Brother Andrew's ministry behind the Iron Curtain.

## **The "How" of Grantham Youth**

Currently, our youth program is consistently supported by:

- 1 Staff Youth Coordinator for 20 hr/wk Chrissy Hoffner (teacher, co-vision caster, organizer)
- 4 regular volunteers Becky Owen, Jonathan Owen, Seth Derliunus, Ron Ross
- Youth Commission: Becky Owen (chair), Jason Clarke (term ended Dec '24), Sara Donovall, Samantha Haar, and Stephen Hensel, Joe Sell (term began Jan '25). Members of the commission attended Refuel at Messiah University, a training/resourcing event again this year. This brought us together as a commission around relevant topics and provided engagement with other youth leaders.
- We have hosted 3 Messiah University Students in the past year: Maddie (summer '24 intern), Nathan (observer) and Sadie (spring - '25 intern).

## **5 Things Looking Ahead...**

- June Book Study – Once again we're inviting adults to join the youth during Learning Community for June. This year, we'll be reading and discussing Pilgrim's Progress. Carrie Harshberger will be facilitating.
- Campfire parent/student kick-off – Youth families, mark your calendars for Aug. 24th at 6pm when we'll kick off our fall schedule.
- Rhythms of Faith partnership with Camp Hebron This is a new initiative Grantham Church has been invited to participate in which is going to study how summer camp impacts family faith formation.
- Winter Wednesdays – We'd like to offer a winter Wednesday evening Bible study option again next year. This was a neat time to come together for a specific study during the winter months that can be dreary.
- Please pour into youth – Please pray for our youth – be aware of who sits near you or looks awkward in the hallway – invite youth into conversation & participation. We are the Church together!

## **Worship Arts Commission**

The purpose of the Worship Arts Commission is to creatively empower Grantham Church in its pursuit of convergent, diverse, intergenerational worship. We exist to advise, create, plan, and otherwise support the worship ministry, helping to foster a church culture of spiritual transformation and connection with God and with one another. Our commission members are Derek Boyce, Paul Cohen, Geoff Isley (secretary), Patrick McKinney, Donna Rossetto, Macy Wright, Orphie Hartman, Greg Lowther (chair), and Dave Perry (Worship Arts Pastor).

With over 70 volunteers contributing to the Worship Arts ministry, the Worship Arts Commission focuses on strengthening and supporting the various expressions of worship at Grantham Church. We continue to welcome new volunteers to the worship team and our other supporting ensembles, like the Choir, Handbell Choir, Children's Choir, Men's Ensemble, and Brass Ensemble. These groups enhance our worship services throughout the year and participate in special services during the Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter seasons.

The Visual Arts Team, under the guidance of Geoff Isley, continues to thrive and contributes regularly to worship through carefully curated artwork aligned with sermon series and liturgical seasons. The Art Gallery, maintained by the team, offers members and friends of Grantham Church a venue to exhibit their work

year-round. In addition, our children and youth continue to contribute artwork for our worship projections, enriching the intergenerational nature of our services.

Special services, including the Taizé and Hymn Sing gatherings, provided meaningful worship opportunities outside the regular service schedule. Our Campfire Worship evenings have now become an annual tradition, as has our summer worship ministry cookout. We hosted the Longest Night service again for the second year on December 21st. This service of lament and hope during the Christmas season incorporated readings, reflections, music, and dance contributions from Gregg and Susan Hurley.

The Advent Lessons and Carols service was a significant highlight of 2024. The service was coordinated and led by the Worship Arts Commission and represented almost a year's worth of commission planning and discussion. The service was a beautiful collaboration not only amongst commission members, but amongst our many ministry volunteers. The result was a highly worshipful and communal service centered around seven Old Testament prophecies paired with their New Testament fulfillments in Jesus Christ, our Emmanuel. Feedback from the congregation was overwhelmingly positive, with many sharing the profound impact the service had on them.

We are deeply grateful for the many gifts and contributions of our congregation and look forward to how God will continue to work through the Worship Arts ministry in the coming year.

## **THE GRANTHAM CHURCH BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

### **LEADING PEOPLE TO THE GOD WHO LOOKS LIKE JESUS.**

Grantham Church exists to love and worship God and disciple people in Christ, the Scriptures, and the Spirit's power to radically love our neighbors and our world.

### **DISCIPLE**

Jesus pursues us and calls us to follow him. Therefore, we are committed to worship, spiritual formation, and making disciples who declare and demonstrate God's glory and grace. We do this by "working the spaces" of public, social, personal, and intimate relationship.

### **SERVE**

Jesus demonstrates a life of service. Therefore, we help our members understand the way they are uniquely created by God and identify opportunities to serve in the church and in the broader community.

### **WELCOME**

Jesus welcomes us to his table and into his family. Therefore, we do the same and extend a warm welcome to everyone we meet. We do this by loving strangers, neighbors, and enemies.

### **UNIFY**

Jesus is the Son of God in loving union with the Father and Holy Spirit. Therefore, we promote and pursue diversity in our leadership and congregation, embrace convergent worship, and model third-way unity that bridges the divides of political and theological differences.

### **WITNESS**

Jesus fills us with his Spirit and sends us out to be his ambassadors. Therefore, we equip and empower our congregation to lovingly share their faith, invite people to join us in worship, and lead people to the God who looks like Jesus.

# NOTES

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# Grantham Church

BRETHREN IN CHRIST

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