



# SPRING 2026 REPORTING COUNCIL



Grantham  
Church  
BRETHREN IN CHRIST

Sunday, April 26th  
[granthamchurch.org/council](http://granthamchurch.org/council)

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Your Church Board and its Committees, the Church's Commissions, and the Pastoral Staff provide this report to you for our Spring 2026 Reporting Council rejoicing for everything that God and the Holy Spirit accomplished through the Grantham Church in 2025.

Our common vision is to love and worship God and to disciple people in Christ, the Scriptures, and the Spirit's power to radically love our neighbors and our world. The reports in this booklet record the life of our congregation in 2025. It isn't possible to capture everything that happened in and through the Grantham Church last year, but these reports provide a window into how we joined together in many different ways to plan, live, and work to be a Congregation that is leading people to the God who looks like Jesus.

This year's council meeting features a look at how the Board, the Pastoral Staff, and the Committees have been planning to maintain the building that God has made it possible for us to use. Our building was built in 1998, which means we have been ministering here for 28 years! Your Church leadership is committed to being good stewards of what God has given to Grantham, and of the gifts and offerings that you have entrusted to us. This necessary maintenance is not merely for the sake of keeping up a structure — you will also hear at Council about how we are planning for our future together including our participation in the multi-year Thriving Congregations Initiative with our Susquehanna Conference leadership and other BIC churches in our area. The Board and the Staff are genuinely excited about the Initiative's focus on preparing us and our ministries to adapt and grow into the future.

We invite you to read these reports, to join us at Council on April 26, 2026, to hear the presentations, to joyfully celebrate our ministries, and to look forward with anticipation about where the Spirit will may take us.

# **Facility Renewal and Ministry Expansion Projects**

## **Ensuring a Safe, Welcoming, and Thriving Congregation for the Next Generation**

As we look to care well for the building God has entrusted to us—and to ensure it continues to serve ministry for years to come—the Church Board is recommending that Grantham Church pursue a short-term loan for needed capital improvements to our nearly 30-year-old facility. Over the last several months to a year, the Church Board has consulted with the Property & Facilities Committee (PFC) and Director of Operations, the Finance Committee, and the Ministry Support Committee to listen carefully, identify facility needs, explore cost estimates and savings opportunities, and prayerfully consider funding options.

Projects anticipated over the next two years include:

- Replacing boilers, a heating unit, and air handlers
- Roofing over the fellowship hall, hallway, and children’s classrooms
- Updating flooring in and outside the sanctuary
- Completing sanctuary ceiling repair and painting
- Sealing the parking lot
- Installing handicap door access controllers
- Updating directional signage and banners, and installing more prominent, modern signage in front of the church to distinguish our place on Grantham Road
- Purchasing select equipment needed for property and facility maintenance and for enhancing worship (including cameras for livestream)

These projects collectively represent a significant investment of nearly \$600,000 and are needed now because our facility serves as a year-round ministry hub for people of all ages—supporting individuals, families, small groups, learning communities, and larger gatherings, as well as congregants, community residents, and visitors alike. While the Church is more than a building, our space is vital to worship, spiritual growth, community building, and equipping each other for mission. As faithful stewards, we must address essential systems and maintenance to prevent disruptions to ministry. In 2028, Grantham Church will celebrate both the Brethren in Christ denomination’s 250th anniversary and our 30th year in this facility, making our church a natural host for milestone events.

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These updates will help ensure our building and property are safe, accessible, and as welcoming in practice as we are in spirit to all who join us to encounter the God who looks like Jesus.

The Church Board, PFC, Finance Committee, and Ministry Support Committee considered several funding options for this work: using reserves, starting a capital campaign, or taking a loan. While we will use some restricted capital funds, we aim to keep three to six months of unrestricted reserves to ensure stable and responsive ministry operations. Ultimately, Church Board is recommending that we pursue a short-term loan, which offers flexibility to manage projects efficiently without depleting reserves, and encourages prayerful, congregation-wide participation and generosity. By paying back a loan through our general fund offerings, we will regularly see gifts of all amounts at work toward our shared goal and may be challenged to increase our giving as we individually and collectively rely on God's provision. This approach aligns with core BIC values: sharing responsibility as a faith community, making wise investments, and trusting God to provide through His people for the ministry to which we are called—welcoming and representing God's Kingdom on earth.

Thank you, in advance, for joining us in this exciting opportunity to grow our faith, generosity, and gospel impact.

## **GRANTHAM CHURCH BOARD**

In 2025, the Grantham Church Board was Senior Pastor David Flowers, Rachel Jasitt (Board Vice Chair), Patti Hess, Ken Martin, James Smiley, Pam Thomas (Board Secretary), Phil Thuma (Church Treasurer), John Yeatts, and Brian Zweiacher (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, Worship Pastor Dave Perry, Children's Pastor Denise Fogelsanger, and Youth Pastor Chrissy Hoffner 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, establish or approve policies for the church, and provide oversight of Church operations.

Among the many details that Church Board attended to in 2026, we:

- Prayerfully considered across a number of meetings the various needs for the care and upkeep of our building (2025 and early 2026 was an eventful period for our building!).
- Conducted Pastor David's midterm review under the leadership of Pastor Layne Lebo.
- Joyfully approved the ordination of Pastor David and Pastor Melissa!
- Followed the progress of the Thriving Congregations Initiative via reports from Pastor David.
- Created a subcommittee of the Board that has been reviewing and organizing our membership list.
- Oversaw budgetary matters including the church's annual budget and financial items that inevitably arise during the year.
- Received the annual audit of the Church's financial records from Hamilton and Musser.
- 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, John Sider, 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 2025. Annual external audits by Hamilton and Musser have been carried out for the years 2022 to 2024, and in May 2026 the auditors will perform an “agreed upon procedures” financial review to verify the figures for 2025. The Board allocated \$50,000 from the 2025 year-end income/expenses balance to the Capital Fund.

	<b>2025 Actual</b>	<b>2025 Budget</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>% utilized (of 100% expected)</b>
<b>INCOME</b>				
Unrestricted Contributions	\$980,574	991,325	(10,751)	98.9%
Misc Income	\$2,227	0	2,227	
Program Revenue / Facility Use	\$19,538	4,510	15,028	433.2%
Interest	\$4,148	5,500	(1,352)	75.4%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1,006,487</b>	1,001,335	<b>5,152</b>	<b>100.5%</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$956,143</b>	1,001,335	<b>(45,192)</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>Preliminary Income/Expenses</b>	<b>\$50,344</b>			

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The November 2025 Church Council approved a flat budget for the General Fund budget in 2026 when compared to our 2025 approved budget. We have noted that in the first quarter of 2026 General Fund actual giving has been above budgeted income, for which we give thanks. Expenses year to date (as of February 28, 2026) remain below budget. See chart below.

	2026 YTD Actual	2026 YTD Budget	2026 YTD Variance	Annual Budget
<b>INCOME</b>				
Unrestricted Contributions	\$165,764	160,312	5,452	\$991,759
Misc Income	\$212		212	
Interest	\$631	808	(178)	\$5,000
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$166,607</b>	<b>161,120</b>	<b>5,487</b>	<b>\$996,759</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$158,589</b>	161,120	<b>(2,531)</b>	<b>996,759</b>
<b>Preliminary Income/Expenses</b>	<b>\$8,018</b>			

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

## 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:** Sarah Becking, Donna Bert, Derek Boyce (staff), Heidi Curry, Les Engle, Denny Mann, Ken Martin (chair), Tom Rudy, Chris Young.

The Property and Facilities Committee continued to give oversight for the acquisition, maintenance, and repair of the buildings, fixtures, and equipment that are owned or operated by the Grantham Church. Our campus is used extensively, and there are very few days when we aren't hosting a congregational meeting or community event. Built in 1998, our building remains in excellent condition. However, systems fail and need to be replaced after nearly thirty years of use. Hence, you can view the proposed capital projects to be completed in the next two years.

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Probably the highlight of the year was our ability to add a full-time Director of Operations, Derek Boyce. His daily presence helps to schedule our facilities efficiently and assures us that equipment is operating properly and safely. He has purchased supplies and repairs in a cost-saving manner and helped to ensure that contracts are completed. Through his short tenure the relationships with Messiah University have strengthened.

We now have automatic remote locks for our external doors which help manage access during evening and less busy times. All lights in our buildings and parking areas are LED which will result in significant cost savings. Soon all roofing will be replaced along with new boilers and a fire alarm system that is code compliant. We anticipate the resealing of all asphalt parking and travel lanes.

The planned projects to be completed this year at an approximate cost of \$420,000 include: resealing of the parking lot; replacement of air handlers in the C wing, roofing over the children's classrooms and Fellowship Hall, flooring in the areas outside the sanctuary, replacing the large directional sign and banners, and the installation of an electronic sign at the entrance. Projects in 2027 are estimated to cost \$210,000 and include repainting the sanctuary with repairs to the ceiling along with floor replacement, upgrading the cameras for livestreaming, installing ADA door controllers, and purchasing a used utility tractor.

We could not operate our facilities without numerous volunteers, thank you! Volunteers open the church on Sunday mornings and walk through the interior for the daily closing. Our mowing and gardening volunteers keep our exterior areas trimmed and mowed.

Special appreciation is extended to our PFC members for their sacrificial services.

## **CARE TEAMS**

The Care Teams Ministry is responsible for meeting certain needs of the congregation as well as others whom we become aware of. During 2025, the Care Team Ministry continued ministry with eight care teams. Accomplishments for April 1, 2025 through March 31, 2026 were as follows. Where pertinent, future initiatives are included.

## **Baptism Team (Ken and Lisa Sechrist, Coordinators)**

The baptism team saw a major change this past year. Duane Asper stepped down as our leader, and we want to thank Duane for his many years of service as a Deacon and leading the baptism team. In 2025 we had four separate sets of baptisms performed by Pastor Flowers: one before Easter for college students not available on Easter; one on Easter Sunday; a late summer baptism in the Yellow Breaches creek; and, one on the Sunday before Thanksgiving. We baptized a total of 15 people for the 2025 year! Dwayne Johnson agreed to assist Lisa and Ken with getting those being baptized safely into and out of the creek. We also held our first 2026 baptism on Easter Sunday with one individual making this life changing commitment.

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

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, which is usually the first Sunday of the month, Susan asks people in the congregation to serve communion. They meet with the pastor, usually Pastor David, for instructions at 10:15. During the past twelve months, a total of 51 different people served communion. Additionally, 2-3 people help with communion preparation and clean up.

Communion Supply costs are budgeted for under the Congregational Care dept (but not from the Benevolence Fund). In 2025/26 we paid \$223.71 for communion supplies, and we paid \$162.30 to Concordia for the pre-packaged communion, for a total of \$386.01. The approved budget for the year for communion supplies is \$500.

**Future:** We will continue to provide this opportunity to many in our congregation. Susan Felix 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 (generally Roger and Joanne Sider) who help prepare for and clean up after communion. Susan is happy to invite others to share in this responsibility. Please contact her either in person or at [sfelix17019@gmail.com](mailto:sfelix17019@gmail.com) if you would like to be part of the Communion Team.

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

During this past year the Maundy Thursday service team was transferred from the Care Team Ministry to the Discipleship Commission since it seemed to be a better placement for that event.

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

The transportation team consists of 12 volunteers.

Several volunteers regularly transport five people to and from worship services on Sunday mornings. In November one person was transported to/from the Discovery class held in the church building.

**Future:** There are currently 5 people who need to be transported to and from worship services. Two of those individuals are being cared for each Sunday by a consistent driver. We also have a couple and a single person who need transportation and some assistance getting in and out of vehicles. Mobility devices are also involved.

The transportation care team currently consists of 12 members. Most if not all of these members are involved in additional ministries of the congregation, which means that the team member cannot always help to drive the Sunday regulars to/from church due to their other commitments. We use a sign-up system which seems to work well. It would be very helpful if more people are willing to join the transportation team it would be very helpful.

Anyone with interest or any questions please contact Elaine Thuma by email (preferred) at [elaine.thuma@gmail.com](mailto:elaine.thuma@gmail.com) or text/call 717-343-0383 (text first since unknown numbers are not always answered!)

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

Since April, 2025, the Take Them a Meal team has provided meals for 8 different families/individuals. 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:** Originally, about 51 folks signed up to be contacted when the need arises, but only the same 14-15 folks actually sign up to provide meals. The distribution list was pared down this year to include only those who have provided meals in the past. If anyone is interested in being placed on the distribution list, please contact Jan Hess at pianojan88@verizon.net.

### **Caregiving Team (John Yeatts, Coordinator)**

During the last few months, John Yeatts, Mary Jane Fair, and Geoff James established new procedures for the caregiving team as well as the responsibilities for the team coordinator and team members. Caregiving is a whole church responsibility, and these tasks require coordination with the pastoral staff and cooperation/input from everyone in the congregation. Much of this will occur through existing groups in the church including as listed below but may be supplemented by others on the Caregiving Team or within the congregation with special skills/experience:

- Learning communities
- Small groups
- Grandmothers, Young moms, men's bible study, and other groups

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, and this information is taken in part from the Prayer Chain, known hospital listings, homebound people, and input from leaders of groups listed above. 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 way to contact the care team member with any additional information or needs.

During the course of the last twelve months, there have been numerous visits by pastoral staff as well as lay people from the Caregiving Team.

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**Future:** Pastor David and John will share details of the new procedures for the Caregiving Team during the spring reporting council meeting. Currently, there are only five active members outside of church staff on this combined team. We need more people to reach everyone listed on the Google Doc sheet. If you are interested in joining this team and providing this much needed care, please contact John at [jyeatts@granthamchurch.org](mailto:jyeatts@granthamchurch.org).

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

Currently 210 individuals comprise the Grantham Prayer Chain. Over the course of the last year we have sent out approximately 100-125 requests for prayer.

In addition to the prayer chain, we have a weekend prayer listing that is sent out to interested parties. This list is composed of prayer chain requests as well as other concerns that are brought to Tom's attention. Currently, about 115 email addresses receive this weekly listing. If anyone is interested in receiving this weekly prayer listing, please contact Tom at [tjets@comcast.net](mailto:tjets@comcast.net).

**Future:** Pastor David has expressed an interest in creating a prayer team. This would be an expansion of participants who can offer prayer services (beyond the chain) in the coming months. For example, some folks could gather to pray for a few minutes before the service and others who are available after the service in a designated area. Pastor David will share more information on this at the spring reporting council meeting.

### **Moving Team (Tom George, Coordinator)**

Duane Asper was our longtime Moving Team leader. Duane stepped down as leader, and we thank Duane for the many years of diligent work that he put into leading the Team.

In 2025, the Team helped to move five individuals/family units. This was up from last year but down from previous years when this team was involved in 8-10 moves per year.

## **Benevolence Fund (Wayne and Rosemary Graffius, Coordinators, in conjunction with Pastor David and Phil Thuma)**

The Benevolence Care team:

1. is available for the pastors to contact when a need becomes known.
2. provides compassionate, prayerful and ongoing connection with our church family and community members while navigating financial challenges.
3. develops and updates lists of community resources and contacts, keeps records of expenditures, and makes suggestions for future ministry opportunities.

During the period April 1, 2025 through March 31, 2026 the Benevolence Fund received donations of \$1,569.41 and paid out a total of \$3,393.01 in benevolence assistance. Of the assistance given, \$1,741.71 (51%) was for counseling sessions, \$567.35 (17%) was for emergency lodging, \$1,000.00 (29%) was for a car down payment, and \$83.95 (3%) was for miscellaneous cleaning supplies.

The current remaining balance in the Benevolence Fund is \$1,910.65 plus \$2,500 as allocated from the 2026 General Fund.

If you want to donate to our Benevolence Fund, you can give your gift through the offering on Sunday morning, or through our on-line giving system. If you have any questions about giving to the Fund, please see Pastor David or Phil Thuma.

### **Future:**

1. Expand our team to include members with specific experience in social work or counseling.
2. Have resource material for each county organized and easily accessible digitally and as handouts when needed.
3. Develop a simple assessment tool for ongoing connection and follow-up that could also serve as a tracking system and evaluation tool.

## **CHILDREN'S MINISTRY COMMISSION**

Our Commission members include Patty Beardsley, Melissa Cohen, Libby Coldsmith, Denise Fogelsanger, Julie Hoffner, Beth Huffnagle, Dawn Isley, Melinda McGrath and Samantha Mummert. 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 5<sup>th</sup> grade may leave the church service at 11 a.m. to attend Kids' Own Worship. Nursery and pre-school ministry classes are also offered during the worship service. Volunteers are instrumental in all areas weekly.

### **Outreach Events:**

**Sing and Play** has been offered at Grantham for 20 years, usually 2 sessions on Friday mornings. These are held September – December, and January – March. We had around 85 children each week in both time slots. The children range in age from 1 to 5 years. We have had 184 families register throughout the 25-26 season, and only eight families are from our congregation. A special thank you goes to Beth Huffnagle for leading this event, and to all the volunteers who set up the day prior, participate during Sing and Play, and clean-up after each event.

**VBS** was held June 16-20. The theme was *Egypt: Joseph's Journey from Prison to Palace* and was attended by 108 students who had completed kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. 56 volunteers supported us during VBS week.

**Aroma Sports Camp** was held during the week after VBS. 71 children and 12 Messiah students who run the camp were in attendance. Seven 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 26. We saw 225 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.

**The Miracle of Jesus** was the theme for our children's Christmas program. This family Christmas event, held on December 12, was attended by 60 people from our church and the community. Ten volunteers took part in making it a success.

**The Egg Hunt** was attended by 118 children and many family/friends on March 28, 2026. Five youth helped to facilitate the set up and hiding the eggs. Many people helped to provide and serve breakfast goodies, register attendees and engage with guests. In addition, a thank you goes to all those families that filled eggs prior to the event.

**Moms Together** now meets twice a month, with a meeting and childcare on the first Wednesday and a playgroup on the third Wednesday. Through these gatherings, the moms have created a safe space to share their experiences and provide encouragement to one another. Several new members joined after hearing about the group through Sing & Play. There continues to be a clear need for moms in our community to have opportunities to connect with other stay-at-home parents.

Our church family gained 3 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. Forty people from 12 households attended Family Movie Night on August 8.

Samantha Mummert has accepted the new part-time position of Children's Team Coordinator. She will oversee all aspects of children's ministry team members, including recruiting and providing training and development for individuals serving as teachers, group leaders, and care staff for all events requesting supervision for children.

I would like to thank the many, many team members 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).

### **Activities in 2025 and Early 2026:**

- **Discipleship Culture:** The Commission spent several months engaging with materials that helped us gain a deeper understanding of the wholistic nature of the gospel and how to apply it to our lives and community life at Grantham Church and beyond. We expect to utilize these materials in various discipleship settings going forward.
- **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. There is an average of 80 participants across all four classes during the fall and spring. The four classes joined together once in the fall 2025 and once in the winter 2026 for special intergenerational story-sharing sessions. Thank you to our regular LC leaders/teachers: Randy & Rebekah Basinger, Jason & Leah Clarke, Lona Climenhaga, MJ Fair, David Flowers, Angela Hare, Rachael Jasitt, Melissa Lowther, Ken & Yvonne Martin, Glen Pierce, Rich Stuebing, and John Yeatts.
- **Small Groups:** Eight groups meet consistently (a new group began May 2025), most of which process the sermons and focus on application and caring for one another. Approximately 20% of the adults in our congregation are members of a small group. Thank you to our regular small group leaders/facilitators: Lynn Brown, Bob & Susan Felix, David Flowers, Wayne & Rosemary Graffius, Miki Howell, Dave Hudson, Pam Thomas, and Phil & Elaine Thuma.
- **Intentional Discipleship Groups (IDGs):** Three IDGs (groups of three to four people) are meeting regularly in 2025-2026 to pursue Scripture-fueled obedience to Jesus, in an open and honest community, for the sake of their neighbors.

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- **College ministry:** We are grateful that many college students, mostly from Messiah University, attend worship services regularly and have integrated into the life of our church through serving and participating in various ministries, including our Young Adult Learning Community. College student lunches (3-4 per semester) have been spaces for students to connect with others in the congregation and engage in discussion around relevant topics. College greeters in place after services have helped intentionally engage with students. Our students also look forward to receiving encouragement bags three times per year. Thank you to our College Ministry Team: Roger Johnson, Katie Logan (leader), Melissa Lowther, Ann Mark, and John Sider.
- **Grandmothers in Prayer** continues to be a place of support and prayer for approx. 20 grandmothers seeking to influence their grandchildren with the love of Christ. Various leaders have facilitated discussions around the book *A Grandmother's Prayers*. Thank you to Velma Yoder who coordinates this group.
- **Men's Bible Study:** The men's Bible study that meets on Fridays at 6:45 AM studied 1 Samuel and is now in 2 Samuel. About 10-12 men participate on average. Thank you to leader Rich Stuebing.
- **GriefWork:** These 8-week grief support groups have received very positive feedback from the seventeen people who benefitted from the groups held in spring 2025 and winter 2026. Thank you to leaders MJ Fair and Dr. Geoff James.
- **Couples' Date Night:** In February 2026, eighteen couples participated in the Enneagram date night, which created space for understanding each person's unique personality and engaging in meaningful conversation to strengthen their relationship.
- **Library:** Our Church Library is actively used by young and old alike. Librarian Edie Asbury reports there were 670 sign-outs in 2025 (up from 549 in 2024). The library's annual reading challenge in 2025 focused on "Hope in the Lord" and had an increase in participants and number of books read compared to 2024. The topic for 2026 is "Witnessing to the World: at home and abroad."

Through this report, we celebrate that approximately 40% of the adults in our congregation are engaged in a formal discipleship group through Grantham Church, whether Learning Community, Small Group, Intentional Discipleship Group, Bible Study, or Grandmothers in Prayer. We would love to see even more moving into the personal and intimate spaces of relationship to foster greater spiritual growth.

What we can't see from this report is how God is using these groups — as well as other spiritual practices, everyday friendships, our gathered worship, and more — to shape us more into the image of Christ as we learn and seek to follow him. As we delve into the Scriptures, share vulnerably, uplift one another, and spur one another on to show and share the love of Jesus, we are experiencing God's transforming grace in big and small ways. We encourage you to ask one another how you've experienced God at work in your life this year!

## **MISSIONS AND MULTICULTURAL MINISTRY COMMISSION**

The purpose of the Missions & Multicultural Ministry Commission is to offer various means of support to BIC U.S. World Missions (WM) 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. We are grateful for ongoing interest and support from our congregation.

Our current members are Kathy Stuebing, Phil Thuma, David Flowers, Ruth Bert, Esther Hess, Lydia Lloyd and Jonathan Owen (chair).

### **Global Missions Awareness**

Grantham Church helped support Micah Owen and Seth Derliunas on a short-term trip to Dearborn, MI organized by BIC U.S. WM and a local organization. (Becky Owen participated as staff of WM.) They helped host English & math camp for refugee children, many of whom are learning about the Christian understanding of Jesus for the first time. The local organization works with families throughout the year and is open about their Christian faith. Short-term missions funds helped support Savannah Schmidt (a regular attender) as she served at a Christian summer camp.

**On Missions Sunday (November 16, 2025)** we considered how God is on the move around the world. Jonathan Lloyd spoke on The Peculiar Call to the Mission of God: to become like foreigners, citizens of another kingdom who are sent by God to share Christ with the world. The message included an interview with Yosuel and Jacqui Medina, BIC missionaries we support in Ecuador.

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Our offering (\$7,662 total) went to the Nanki Tsakari project (<https://partnership.bicus.org/search/nanki/>) run by the Medinas (\$7,000) and assisted with training for a local Hispanic church planting pastor (\$662). Jonathan Lloyd shared in a learning community about the realities of missionary work today including stories which could not be shared in a live-streamed service.

### **Global Worker Support**

Grantham gives \$6,000 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 U.S. WM, and other ways of giving to specific projects or missionaries.

### **Local Multicultural + Refugee Support**

There were significant changes to U.S. refugee programs in 2025. We are grateful for the ongoing work of the Love in Action group and those from Grantham who have volunteered in various ways. We are also thankful for the growing number of BIC and other congregations focused on reaching our neighbors of various cultures.

### **Coming Up in 2026**

- Applications are due June 5 for those interested in joining one of the BIC teams serving this August in Dearborn, MI. (See <https://bicus.org/missions/go/short-term/>) Some support funds for short term mission trips are available from our congregation.
- Our next Missions Sunday is scheduled for November 8. Jason and Rebekah Oberholser plan to share about their work among the Navajo and their other neighbors in New Mexico.

**Please pray for:**

- The missionaries and families we support (see the list above).
- God's help for each of us to live differently from our society so that we can bear witness to God's character, love, and salvation among our friends and neighbors.

## **PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMISSION**

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

### **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.

### **Activities in 2024**

- **Peacemaking**
  - On April 22, we hosted our annual Peace Sunday dedicated to the theme: "Anabaptism: The Way of Peace"
    - 2025 marked the 500th anniversary of the sixteenth century Anabaptist movement. The Brethren in Christ Church started with Anabaptists in Lancaster County, who had experienced a fresh wind of the Holy Spirit in the late 1700s. We celebrated the beginnings of Anabaptism, its core beliefs and theological convictions, its call to radical discipleship, and its potential as a much-needed renewal movement within American Christianity.
    - Our guest speaker was Hank Johnson, Senior Pastor of Harrisburg BIC.

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- During a well-attended combined Learning Community, Pastor David summarized his article “Anabaptism: Then and Now: A More Christlike Community,” published in the BIC History & Life journal in April 2025. Joshua Nolt, senior Pastor of Lancaster BIC, also spoke.
- Over the past several years, the Peace & Social Justice Commission has focused our activities on three primary areas:
  - Peacemaking
  - Racial Justice
  - Creation Care (environmental justice)

In late 2025, however, we felt led to add an additional focus – immigrants and refugees – in light of pressing practical needs and political turmoil in our nation. We hosted a luncheon in November with Rolando Flores Rentas, Southcentral PA Program Coordinator for Mennonite Central Committee’s Open Arms Network. We also began planning to dedicate Peace Sunday 2026 to the theme of “Welcoming the Stranger.”

- In our meetings, we regularly discussed the challenge of moving beyond simply providing our congregation with more information to the more tangible of goals of inspiring and equipping all of us to take concrete actions to promote peace and social justice.

### Plans for 2026

- Peacemaking
  - On April 19, we are hosting our annual Peace Sunday
    - Our guest speaker will be Matthew Soerens, U.S. Director of Church Mobilization and Advocacy for World Relief and co-author of three books, including Welcoming the Stranger (InterVarsity Press, 2018), and Inalienable (InterVarsity Press, 2022). Matthew also serves as the National Coordinator for the Evangelical Immigration Table, a

coalition that advocates for immigration reforms consistent with biblical values.

- During a combined learning community, Kevin Vereide will facilitate a panel discussion with Matthew Soerens; Sarah Michitsch (Resettlement Program Manager, Church World Service Harrisburg) and Moses Bisimwa (refugee from Democratic Republic of the Congo). The goal is to help our congregation learn how to better work in practical ways to love our immigrant and refugee neighbors and to promote justice through public and political engagement.
- We will debrief after Peace Sunday in order to pray about and to discuss how to promote and sustain these practical ways to serve immigrants and refugees.

## **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), Marc Moure, and Micah Owen.

### **Ministry Partner Support**

One of our commission's major roles is to be liaisons with Grantham Church's four ministry partners. In 2025 we helped execute the proposal of the Ministry Support Committee to highlight one of our Ministry Partners during each of the months in the year that had five Sundays. In March we highlighted Paxton Ministries; in June: ONE80 Ministries; in August: Mennonite Central Committee; and, in November: New Hope Ministries. Support of our Ministry Partners during this initiative and beyond included:

## **Paxton Ministries**

- Residents and staff of Paxton joined our worship service and fellowship meal on March 16.
- Throughout the month of March, our congregation gave \$1701 to Paxton, as well as many personal care items for the residents.
- 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 2025, 55 volunteers helped across the three days and we received much positive feedback from Paxton staff and residents appreciating our efforts.
- We purchased 12 hampers to be given as Christmas gifts to Paxton residents. We have provided these hampers to Paxton over the years to meet the ongoing need for a total of 114 given since 2018.
- Over 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. We celebrate Dave Hudson who received Paxton's 2025 Frey Service Award and Franny McNichol who received their Bright Spot Service Recognition in April. We always welcome more to be part of Paxton's mission to provide support services to adults in need with Christ-like love.

## **ONE80 Ministries**

- During the month of June, our congregation contributed \$40,804 for ONE80's women's transitional housing project. We sent the funds with several notes of encouragement to be given to current and future residents.
- We heard the stories of current residents at a lunch on June 22.
- We continue to partner with ONE80 twice/month to host Fellowship Meals after our Sunday services where anyone is welcome to a free meal and where we can connect with friends, old and new. Thank you to Dawn Isley for her coordination of these meals and many volunteers. In 2026, Dawn will be stepping down from her leadership role, so if you would like to help see these meals continue and would be able to help with volunteer coordination, reach out to Pastor Melissa.
- ONE80 hosted their Annual Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser at Grantham Church on March 14, 2026.
- At least 20 Grantham Church attenders volunteer regularly at ONE80, not including many who help with periodic events and initiatives.

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

- The August highlight focused on our congregational efforts in making quilted comforters that MCC distributes to individuals and families as part of disaster relief efforts. During the month our congregation collected 70 spools of crochet yarn and 70 flat sheets, which can be backing for about 90 comforters saving \$540. We also gave \$605 toward the MCC comforter special fund. An intergenerational group of almost 50 attenders and friends of Grantham Church continue to make comforters. In 2025, the Comforter Crew averaged 5 comforters per week for a total of 250. As of March 2026, they surpassed 1235 comforters made since they began in 2019. Thank you to Geoff Isley for coordinating these efforts.
- Our Grandmothers in Prayer group collected materials to donate 20 school kits, plus additional supplies, to MCC in the fall 2025.
- Thrift on Purpose, which Grantham helped to launch in 2024, celebrated its one-year anniversary in 2025. At least a dozen people from Grantham Church volunteer at Thrift on Purpose regularly, including Jodie Smiley who serves on its Board. Many Grantham Church members continue to support Thrift on Purpose by donating and shopping there.
- Approximately 100 or more attenders of Grantham Church volunteer at, contribute to, and attend the April Pennsylvania Relief Sale each year. Thank you to Dave Hudson and Ken and Yvonne Martin who are Board Members and help to coordinate this statewide event.
- Our congregation's impact through the 2026 My Coins Count initiative will be reported in 2027 as the collection was later than typical this year and is taking place during the writing of this report.

## **New Hope Ministries**

- In place of collecting a specific item for Thanksgiving baskets in 2025, our congregation collected toilet paper, laundry detergent, and food items during the month of November. In God's timing, the collection aligned with a hold on SNAP benefits and time of increased need. Grantham Church collected 649 pounds of goods, which filled a full shipping pallet five feet high. Additionally, we gave \$3049 to New Hope.
- We donated \$300 worth of items for the Christmas blessing shop where those in need can find gifts for their families.

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- At least a half-dozen people from Grantham Church serve regularly at the Mechanicsburg and Dillsburg locations in the food pantry, front desk, teaching classes, and more, not including those who help with periodic events.

### Other Activities in 2025 and Early 2026

- We held several opportunities for conversation and equipping in sharing our faith more intentionally. Lunch & Learns included “Before Belief” which unpacked steps many go through on their journey toward Christ, as well as a BLESS holidays discussion about loving our neighbors during the holiday season. Dave Howell hosted a BLESS book club, which unpacked the acronym **B**egin with prayer, **L**isten, **E**at, **S**erve, and **S**hare the story. We also had a summer campfire stories event to encourage one another and practice sharing ways we see God at work.
- In May, we held a blood drive with the Central Pennsylvania Blood Bank, which resulted in 44 pints of blood collected, having the potential to save up to 132 lives. Ten from Grantham Church donated. We also provided extra snacks and donors commented on our hospitality.
- We hosted a parent meet & greet table during one morning of Vacation Bible School drop-off.
- We partnered with several other Mechanicsburg churches and contributed \$250 toward Mechanicsburg Community Day’s kids zone (July 2025).
- For the third year, we hosted games at the Upper Allen Fall Festival (Sept 2025) and had the opportunity to connect with hundreds of local children and families. This year, we partnered with two other local churches, making the game area even more engaging and demonstrating the unity of God’s Church in our community.
- We added Bridge of Hope as a “Ministry Friend” in February 2026. This ministry serves mothers with children who are homeless and needing a network of support to help them find housing and get established.

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

## **YOUTH COMMISSION**

**Members:** Daniel Curry, Sara Donovall, Samantha Haar, Stephen Hensel, Chrissy Hoffner (staff), Becky Owen (chair), Joe Sell

Our **Fall '25-Spring '26** main meeting times average around 10 youth and 4-5 adults.

- Learning Community is a space where we dive into deeper Bible study together. This school year we've been going through the Gospel of Mark, chapter by chapter.
- EYF (Evening Youth Fellowship) includes a time of playing group games, a shorter lesson, personal response time, snack and prayer for the week ahead. It is designed with the hope of being a space where youth can invite friends.
- Thank you to our 5 faithful volunteers! Seth Derliunus, Carrie Harshberger, Becky Owen, Jonathan Owen, Ron Ross

**Service:** We continue to encourage the youth to get out and serve and provide periodic opportunities to do so together locally.

**Retreats:** This year, our middle schoolers (9) attended Camp Hebron winter youth retreat in early January. High schoolers (6) attended Zeteo weekend put on by Salt'n Light Ministries the last weekend of January. Each was a good opportunity for youth to grow together and interact on deeper levels.

**Thriftmas:** One of our especially fun events this year was a Merry Thriftmas Christmas party which began at Thrift on Purpose in Mechanicsburg. Students were divided into teams, each with an adult youth leader, then given \$40 and 40 minutes to tackle a scavenger hunt and a task list (like procuring non-Christmas materials with which to create Christmas decorations...and dressing their youth leader for a fashion show competition). We then traveled to the church for the creating phase, snacks, the telling of the nativity story with Thrifted characters and the final judging by parents. A good time was had by all!

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**Collaborations:** We again invited youth groups from Mechanicsburg Community Church and Slate Hill Mennonite Church to join us for an evening of games, dinner and devotions in the fall and spring. It was a joy to host these groups! These gatherings have been a highlight for our youth to join with other youth in the area for some larger group activities. It's fun spotting these friends at retreats as well.

**Spudtacular:** Our 4th annual spud event took on a new flare this year as Camp Spudtacular. In addition to youth sharing their talents, representatives from 4 Christian camps came to share about their summer programming. Thank you for supporting our youth with your presence and contributions to help sponsor kids going to camp and retreats. A total of more than \$1,000 was raised for the Campership fund.

### Looking Ahead...

- **Summer Fun:** We will be collaborating with other area youth groups (see above) to plan shared activities to have some collective fun this summer! Stay tuned for details.
- **Campfire parent/student kick-off:** Youth families, mark your calendars for kick off activities (pool party & campfire) August 23rd & 30th... September 13th will kick off our full fall schedule.
- **Reach out:** Please pray for our youth – be aware of who sits near you – invite youth into conversation & participation. Are you 1 in 5 significant adults in a young person's life in our church? We encourage you to consider it! Keep your eyes open for upcoming opportunities and invitations to engage with the youth of our congregation!

## 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 Paul Cohen, Geoff Isley, Patrick McKinney, Derek Boyce, Macy Wright, Orphie Hartman, Greg Lowther (chair), and David Perry (Worship Arts Pastor).

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Worship Arts intersect with so many different aspects of the life of our community. With over 70 volunteers contributing in various ways, one of the primary functions of the Worship Arts Commission is to provide support for the various ministries and activities associated with the Worship Arts. Aside from the Worship Team you see each Sunday, the Choir, Handbell Choir, Children's Choir, Men's Ensemble, and Brass Ensemble regularly rehearse and assist in leading us in worship throughout the year, including special services at Christmas, Lent, and Easter.

In 2025, we held 52 Sunday morning worship services, and 8 special services outside of Sunday morning (not counting the various funerals/weddings that also occur in our building). That means our worship ministry supported and led 60 completely unique gatherings; most of which necessitate a live broadcast, volunteer coordination, musical preparation/rehearsal, sound and lighting, and pastoral guidance. Needless to say, this is a significant endeavor that requires a faithful, skilled team of leaders. While Pastor David Perry was on sabbatical from January through March 2025, the strength of our ministry was evident, as Paul Cohen, Greg Lowther, and others helped to provide continuity in our congregation's worship. Overall, the Commission and ministry are in a very healthy place.

Along with these musical ensembles, the Visual Arts Team continues to thrive and reminds us that the Worship Arts encompass more than just music. The team, with guidance from Geoff Isley, consistently and creatively enhances our worship with thoughtful and thought-provoking artwork that draws us into the theme of each sermon series or liturgical season. Additionally, the team's continued sponsorship of the Art Gallery provides an opportunity for the artwork of our members and friends to be viewed throughout the year. The artwork of our children and teens continues to be incorporated into our song projection slides during our worship services, making our Sunday morning worship more intergenerational.

Along with the special once-per-semester Taizé and Hymn Sing services, there were several especially meaningful and significant special services and events last year. The Longest Night service, held December 21st, was an incredibly moving and beautiful service designed to provide space to express grief and pain at Christmas time, while holding on to the hope of Christ. The service incorporated readings, reflections, congregational singing, and testimony.

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The worship commission planned and led a Worship Ministry Spiritual Retreat Day, facilitated by Dave Hershberger from McBic. This gathering emphasized the need for spiritual formation both “on stage” and “off stage” as artists and worship leaders. The Commission is considering making this retreat an annual event, to further illustrate the importance of soul care.

We continued Campfire Worship for another year, now as an annual event. These campfire worship events, which take place by the ballfield behind the church, provide a truly intergenerational gathering of worship in a more intimate and informal setting. The Worship Arts Commission also planned and led a worship ministry cookout social event last summer that was well attended. As we look ahead, the Commission will be planning another worship ministry cookout for the summer. The Commission will also plan and lead another Advent Lessons and Carols service, tentatively planned for December 6. This project will require almost a year’s worth of Commission planning and discussion, to facilitate collaboration not only amongst Commission members, but amongst our many ministry volunteers.

We’re so grateful for the gifts and talents that so many in our congregation lend to this ministry and we look forward to the ways God will be working in and through us this 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.



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# Grantham Church

BRETHREN IN CHRIST

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