

gcm connect >>

Twenty Years of Grace

By Terri Dewey, GCM missionary, Virginia Tech University



This summer, New Life Christian Fellowship (NLCF) at Virginia Tech celebrated its 20th anniversary. Many alumni came back one weekend to remember what God has done in NLCF's history, and during the anniversary service, this collective prayer was read aloud:

By faith, JR Woodward began intentionally supporting what God was doing in the lives of a few people at Virginia Tech. By faith, one group who

met together believed God was asking them to multiply, and two home groups grew from one. By faith, they prayed for the Holy Spirit to move in the lives of people who did not yet know Jesus, and as they shared their faith, people committed their lives to Christ, were baptized, and began to give their lives to build His kingdom.

By faith, NLCF grew from one service of 30 people to three services with two congregations. By faith, NLCF multiplied worship leaders and began expressions of worship through art, video and dance. By faith, NLCF began Little Lights and a youth group to partner with parents in creating lifelong followers of Jesus. By faith, four downtown NLCF home groups were started and have been a light to members of the working and graduate community in Blacksburg.

By faith, NLCF sent people out to love and serve their neighbors in Ukraine, Honduras, Nicaragua, Canada, the Dominican Republic, New Orleans, Mississippi and West Virginia. By faith, NLCF has sent 450 people over 13 years to invest a summer in growing their faith at Leadership Training. By faith, NLCF helped begin a non-profit organization, a network of missional churches, and has supported two churches seeking leadership guidance. (cont. page 2)

Experience of a Lifetime

College students get exposed to missions through short-term trips

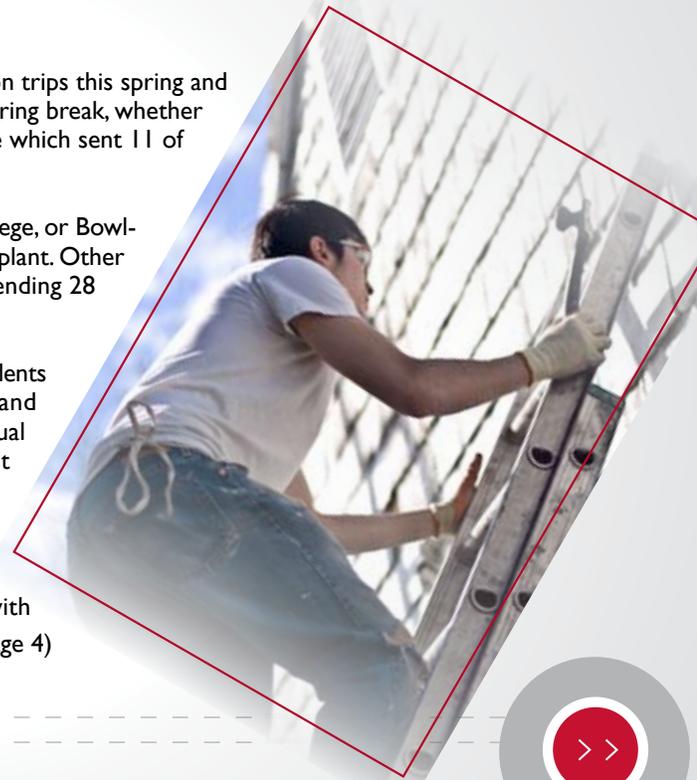
GCM missionaries across the nation led teams of students on short-term mission trips this spring and summer. Most campus ministries engaged in some form of mission work over spring break, whether domestic or foreign. Even brand-new churches sent teams, like h2o at Kent State which sent 11 of its 40 members to Greensboro, NC, for a mission trip.

Some trips focused on evangelism, like Iowa State doing outreach at a nearby college, or Bowling Green State sending students to Cincinnati to prepare for a possible church plant. Other campuses focused on international compassion ministry, with Michigan State sending 28 people to Mexico and Texas A&M sending students to Nigeria, Mexico and Italy.

Some of the largest groups were sent by New Life Church in Michigan, as 158 students participated in spring break trips to Haiti, El Salvador, New Orleans, Detroit and other locations. Five of the eight trips were for service, while three were spiritual retreats. Gator Christian Life in Florida also mobilized many students, as they sent teams to Nicaragua and to six campuses in the Atlantic region over spring break. The Gators also sent summer teams to Spain and Honduras.

Most of these short-term trips served the purpose of boosting an established church or ministry. Several churches have developed long-term relationships with

(cont. page 4)



Twenty Years of Grace (cont.) >>

By faith, NLCF walked through the tragedy of the April 16 shootings together as a community. By faith, young leaders guided their home groups to search for hope and to be a light and comfort to others. By faith, they demonstrated wisdom and maturity beyond their years, and by faith, we continue to walk forward together through the fallout of confusion and grief that remains.

By faith, NLCF has raised up 40 staff to serve Christ's church and has sent out multiple missionaries. By faith, students have chosen to serve their global neighbors in international churches and organizations. By faith, several women have stepped into leadership within NLCF as home group leaders, teachers, deacons, and staff. By faith, NLCF has sent forth pastors and members to plant new churches on the campus of Radford University, Kairos in Los Angeles, and Imago Dei in Richmond, VA. By faith, Kairos has planted another church in West L.A.

By faith NLCF continues to invest in spiritual growth, invite others to follow Jesus, and inspire one another to change the world.

New Work in Milan

by Frank and Pam Apisa, GCM missionaries, Italy

From the time we moved to Torino in 1999 to plant the first GCM church in Italy, we desired to reach out to the 1.4 million university students throughout Italy. Within five years, we had nine staff in Torino and we began to strategize about one-, five- and ten-year goals. God began speaking to the leaders about a long-range vision for reaching major Italian universities with the gospel.

In April 2008 we sent two mission teams to Milan and Genoa to "spy out the land" and discern where God was working. We chose cities within two hours of Torino so that we'd be able to keep



English Club in Milan

in close contact with the new church plant during its transition. Our young believers were enthusiastic about talking to students in these cities, even in the rain, when many stopped to take spiritual interest surveys. At seeing so few workers in such a large field, Frank felt the Lord tugging at his heart. The Christians we met who work with students have been discouraged by the lack of spiritual response. They confirmed that the need in Milan is great, since there are over 150,000 students.

Through the summer months, God continued to confirm that this is where he was leading us to plant the next church. A missionary and a pastor in Milan helped us determine the area with the greatest need for outreach. They encouraged us toward the University of Bicocca, which has 30,000 students in a campus setting similar to American universities. God led us to a young man who was excited to help us get established, and through him and his co-worker Marco, God has opened many

doors for us, allowing us to use university classrooms for English Clubs. This March, a short-term team from Texas A&M taught English to Bicocca students for one week and then helped us follow-up with the young people for another week. They were key in helping us meet students on campus.

Three people from Torino and one young man from Texas have already enthusiastically joined the team to Milan. We are moving there in July and the others plan to join us in September. Please pray that God will bring a great harvest among young people in Milan!

Meet the Staff at VA Tech



Jenna Caracciolo
Administration, finance, discipleship, youth ministry, leadership training.



Terri Dewey
Prepares Sunday services, helps run the leadership community, leads worship.



Steve & Amy Englund
Disciple students, lead missions trips, help with small groups and services.



Ryan Hartsook
Leads a home group, disciples, helps run Leadership Training.



Sarah Holloway
Small groups, worship, designs NLCF classes, helps lead mission trips.



Kristal Newer
Co-leads worship, women's ministry, discipleship, and building community.



Jim Pace
A pastor, oversees church structures, teaches, coaches, and networks.



Joe Racek
Teaching, administration, social justice, oversees downtown congregation.



Matt Rogers
A pastor, teaches, disciples students, oversees the church's small groups.



Jeanette Staats
Directs children's ministry, organizes events and projects, discipleship.



Mike Swann
Pastor, oversees Sunday services, staff team and Leadership Training.



Brandon Thompson
Music minister, equips and mentors students in worship and discipleship.



Kati Williams
Discipleship, evening church service hospitality, missions to Ukraine.

Count Your Blessings

...and see what God has done at Texas A&M University

How do you sum up a year of blessings? Well, doing the numbers is a good place to start. The campus missionaries working with Fellowship Church at Texas A&M University were amazed at God's goodness during the 2008-2009 school year. Many new students were exposed to the gospel as they recorded over 400 first time visitors—sixty more than last year. The number of students receiving regular discipleship in home groups rose by 33 percent, from 210 to 280. In fact, a new home group had to be started, bringing the total to 12 student home groups.

It was a joy to see nine students give their lives to Christ and fifteen be baptized. And the equipping classes and leadership training classes were especially well-attended, with 120 students participating—forty more than last year. In addition, the GCM staff team grew over the last year, as five new people devoted themselves to vocational ministry. Kyle Kroeger, Sharon Jaffe, Clif Turner, Greg Stadter and Brent Wilson are new additions to the team, all still raising support.

With this large increase in student leaders and staff, the team at Texas A&M believes God has enabled them to launch a new church. That is why many of the new staff are part of a 2010 church plant headed to Texas State University in San Marcos. "We have a church plant team of about 18 that's meeting weekly," says GCM missionary David Grotheim. "The members were leaders of home groups, and we have replaced ourselves and pulled out of that ministry to focus on the church plant. One couple has already moved to San Marcos."

It is not just this team but the church as a whole that has been mobilized into mission. More than 15% of church members participated in short term missions or summer Leadership



A student home group at Texas A&M

Training this past year, going to locations such as Nigeria, Italy and Mexico. In Italy, 12 people led English Clubs and helped the church form relationships with unbelievers. This served as preparation for a future church plant (see "New Work in Milan" p.2), since the missionaries will be starting a Bible study with some of the students from the English Club.

Stephen Meunich asks, "Please pray that the Lord will continue to use our ministry to cultivate vibrant, growing men and women of God."

Sheep without a Shepherd

by Chad Frank, GCM missionary, Kent State University, Ohio

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers." (Matt 9:36-38)

Matthew's depiction of the crowds is an accurate description of today's colleges and universities. A glance at the college scene leaves the feeling that students are "harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." Without a purpose in their lives, many follow the crowd into unhealthy relationships, addictions, and emptiness. We echo Jesus' reaction by yearning for workers to guide them to the Father.



Chad and Eva Frank, with Brooklynn

But however great the need, there is equally great potential in this crowd. Looking at Jesus' instructions in verse 38, I ask myself, "Where would these workers come from? Would they not come from the very harvest he had compassion upon seeing?"

They must have. The same crowd he looked on with sympathy would soon become the workers he prayed for. Jesus was speaking to 72 followers at most (see Luke 10), but just a few years later, Acts chapters 8 and 11 suggest that members of this same crowd were taking the gospel to the very ends of the known world!

This is the beauty of God's plan to reach the world. Those who are currently far from him are the workers he will one day use to reach the harvest. This is particularly true for the crowd of young people gathered on campuses today. As I look at their pursuits, temptations, and struggles to find meaning and significance, I too am moved with compassion because they are lost. But I realize that these same faces will be the ones Jesus uses to lead the world in the future.

College is the perfect time for someone's life to be truly gripped by Jesus. Students who will one day be leaders in their workplaces, churches, governments, and families can come to college, have their lives forever transformed by the message of Jesus Christ, and leave as missionaries to those very same spheres. By being a "worker" in the lives of students during this strategic four-year window, I have the privilege of seeing Jesus create more workers for the harvest, time and time again.

Please join me in praying that God would *send* workers into his field and that he would *raise up* workers from this same harvest. I believe this is so crucial that I decided a few years ago to set my watch or cell phone to beep everyday at 9:38 AM to remind me to pray for the harvest (an idea from author and pastor Neil Cole). I encourage you to do the same!

Home on the Range Becky Nelson serves a growing ministry in North Dakota.

As home to less than half a percent of the U.S.' population, North Dakota may not always make the headlines. But for GCM missionary Becky Nelson, this state is home to a growing college ministry at the University of North Dakota (UND).

Becky was first introduced to GCM eight years ago through the ministry of h2o at UND. Becky's experiences in ministry at h2o and her two summers of Leadership Training in Colorado motivated her to join GCM's staff program. "There's nothing more exciting than watching the Lord grip and radically change a person's life!" says Becky.

Though UND's student population is small, over 50 countries are represented. Becky ministers to these students through an international home group and hopes to expand that ministry. "One of my dreams is to have a house close to campus to host international students for years at a time. It would be a house of ministry for home groups, outreach events, and family meals."



Becky's campus house may still be a dream, but other ministry plans are closer to becoming a reality. Becky is trusting that God may use her as part of a church plant sent by Cottonwood Community Church, that would expand the ministry at UND.

"Though North Dakota has been home for many years, I would be excited about continuing on staff in Bemidji, Minnesota," says Becky. "We are trusting God for a potential church plant there in the next few years and are currently in Bemidji for the summer with a team of college students, living on campus at Bemidji State University and doing evangelism.

We have also partnered with others in ministering to three Native American reservations surrounding the city."

North Dakota may not always make ministry headlines, but God is clearly moving. For Becky, GCM has been an ideal partner. "GCM missionaries have had innumerable effects on my life. My life is wrapped up in this movement." Whether it's the prairies of North Dakota or the lakes of Minnesota, Becky is ready to go and reach the lost.



Next Generation Ministry

BY TOM MAURIELLO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
GCM

We will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the Lord, about his power and his mighty wonders. (Ps. 78:4, NLT)

Each year as fall approaches we get excited about school starting, since GCM's roots have been firmly planted in campus ministry since the beginning. We are committed to reaching the next generation, knowing that they are the future leaders and ministers to a needy world. And reaching the next generation is accomplished nowhere better than in churches on college campuses around the country.

Campus churches provide students with the opportunity to worship and hear the gospel in their local community, in a form that is relevant to them. Our goal is to see young people's lives transformed and to see them built up in Christ, equipped to transform their own future families, communities and countries.

Each year campus churches lose up to 25 percent of their leaders and attendees, as senior classes graduate and move on. This is both challenging and beautiful. To see these young men and women move into the world and truly live out the Great Commission is nothing short of inspiring.

At www.gcmweb.org under "Give," you can search through campus locations that may be on your heart and see if GCM is serving there. Would you consider praying for, encouraging or giving to the missionaries who serve diligently at colleges that have influenced you or your family's life?

Thank you again for faithful support and prayers!

Tom

Experience of a Lifetime (cont.)

ministries such as Great Commission Latin America (GCLA). The University of Missouri, Illini Life and Bowling Green all took teams to Memphis to work with Service over Self by renovating houses for some of the poorest Americans. GCM missionary Stacey Lovett said, "Memphis has some very poor neighborhoods where drug use and prostitution are prevalent. Who knew that such a mission field existed in our own backyard?"

Students like Phil, from the University of Michigan, were greatly impacted by their experience. "God challenged me with showing Christ and not being self-centered," he says. Ryan, from Michigan State, was amazed at how kids at the children's home he visited in Mexico opened their hearts to hear and receive God's love. "Through these precious children, we came to know that true joy is found independent of the world's measuring stick."



GCM missionary Fred Kirstein felt that the trip was completely worth it. "This investment of time and money changed the lives not only of some of the poorest people in our country, but also of college students who are still finding direction and vision for their lives."



From Football to Ministry >>>>>

by Rob Warren, GCM missionary
Bowling Green State University, Ohio

Growing up, if you had asked me if I was a follower of God, I would have undoubtedly said yes. However, neither my words nor actions resembled the teachings of Jesus. In my early years as a student athlete at BGSU, my life seemed nearly perfect. I was captain of the football team, doing well in school, engulfed in the party scene, and pursuing the realistic goal of playing in the NFL. But as the years progressed, there was a faint, ever-increasing void in my life that I stubbornly ignored.

My good friend and fellow teammate, Andy Grubb, had the same story. But during my sophomore year, Andy recommitted his life to Christ and went through a drastic transformation. A lot of guys on the team thought he had gone off the deep end, but I had the utmost respect for him. He was one of the most disciplined people I knew, and he followed the Lord with all he had.

The last two years of my career in football, Andy and I were travel buddies for our football games. I would find myself in deep conversations with Andy that always involved the Lord.



Rob Warren

The times we spent together eventually turned into scheduled appointments every week during my senior year of football, and God was the center of nearly all those conversations. I almost stopped ignoring my spiritual void, but it didn't quite stick.

Life was good until football-related injuries turned my NFL aspirations into a pipe dream. I became depressed, and I plunged even further into the party scene.

Drinking, drugs, and girls were now my painkillers. Andy had since gone on staff with GCM, and he gave me the book *Wild at Heart*. It made me hungry for Scripture, and we started having Bible studies together. I also began attending h2o in Bowling Green, where Andy was on staff. Through Andy and h2o, my faith in the Lord began to grow immensely.

I soon felt the urge to be baptized and demonstrate my new faith to others. To this day I have been growing with God and have come to know many great people through h2o and GCM who encourage me daily. I came to realize that my relationship with Andy was much like the relationship that Andy had with Chad Frank, another GCM missionary. Chad mentored Andy much like Andy mentored me. These men and women gave me a clear image of what it means to be a devout follower of Christ.

Since my new faith in Christ, I have followed God's calling to pursue full-time ministry with GCM. From the NFL, to coaching, to teaching, the only thing that gave me a sense of peace was to follow God's leading to join the GCM staff team at Bowling Green State University. I quickly found that I could use all of my gifts and passions to reach people for Christ, just as those at h2o had done for me.

A Hooligan Transformed

By Timmy Powers, GCM missionary, Kiev, Ukraine



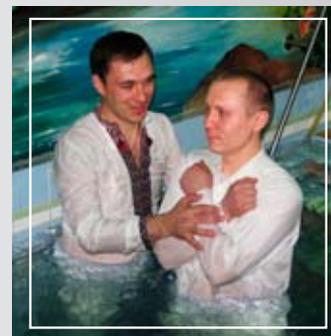
Valeri, an infamous hooligan from Kiev, turned to God from a life of drugs, alcohol, and crime a little more than a year ago. He is a classic example of what Jesus called a "man of peace." Jesus said that when you find a man of peace, stay in his house. In other words, stay with him in his context. Instead of extracting him from his friends and family, help him reach them. This is a principle we are seeing bear much fruit, especially with Valeri.

Two of Valeri's childhood friends and drinking buddies quickly followed his example by giving their lives to Christ. That was only the beginning. From the seed planted in Valeri, the kingdom has spread in many directions. First, a church developed directly among Valeri and his friends. The small fellowship began meeting in a café and later met in an apartment. It grew quickly as Valeri's addict friends wanted to discover what had brought about the dramatic change in his life.

As more and more junkies showed up, desperate for help, Valeri started praying about starting a simple rehabilitation center. With little resources, the only option was to start a center in a dilapidated house in a village outside the city. So, several months ago, Valeri and six of his needy friends started living in and working on a broken down house without electricity or plumbing.

Today the house is a stark contrast to its former self, but this is even more true of the men's lives. They have been set free, and their lives are being remodeled daily. The joy on their faces and fresh hope in their voices is evident.

Now, what is happening in their lives is spreading to two more places. Valeri and his new brothers—nine in all—are helping with community projects in the village. As people watch the transformed lives of the former drug addicts, "good gossip" is spreading in the small town. In addition, some of the men were baptized, and many of their family members attended.



Baptism of one of the men

We discovered that they are so blessed and surprised by what has occurred in their loved one's lives that many of them are interested in hearing more about Christ. Seven or eight of the parents are now attending a discovery Bible study we started especially for them.

What a delight to see the kingdom spreading from life to life!

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2008 Annual Ministry Report

Available online!



GCM has posted its yearly financial statement on www.gcmweb.org under "Who We Are," and we hope you will take time to review it. We take seriously our responsibility to be good stewards of the resources God has entrusted to GCM, and we want to you to be well informed of how those resources were managed. This report also contains highlights from 2008 and statistics on our staff program. If you would like a hard copy of the report mailed to you, simply contact GCM.

Prayer Requests

- Pray for GCM missionaries serving at **universities and colleges** across the nation. Pray that many students would encounter the gospel during these formative years and would grow in leadership and service to Christ's kingdom.
- Pray that the Lord would raise up many **new missionaries** from these campuses to serve in local churches and church plants, in partnership with GCM.
- Pray for our **international missionaries** serving in Europe, Latin America and other regions. Pray that they would be able to equip national believers to lead indigenous churches.
- Pray that GCM missionaries would experience an intimate **walk with the Lord** and stay refreshed in their ministry.

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED!



GCM is committed to mobilizing missionaries to take the good news of Christ's love to the ends of the earth. Would you consider giving to one or more of these life-changing ministries? It is your ongoing partnership that makes the work of GCM possible.



NEW LIFE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP [NLCF]

NLCF ministers to the greater Virginia Tech community and is passionate about inviting others to follow Christ and inspiring one another to change the world. NLCF is raising support for a downtown renovation project that will allow them to serve the heart of Blacksburg's community.



TEXAS STATE CHURCH PLANT

Your gift will help GCM missionaries from Texas A&M plant a new church at Texas State University in San Marcos! The spiritual needs of students at Texas State are great; thousands do not know the grace of Christ and need desperately to be incorporated into a loving church community.



UKRAINE LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Help train disciple-makers and church planters across Ukraine! Your gift will enable Ukrainians to participate in leadership training events and conferences led by GCM missionaries and will help with the translation and publishing of training materials.



WHERE MOST NEEDED

Help support GCM's calling to multiply missionaries around the world. This fund is currently directed toward recruiting and training new missionaries.