

April 14, 2024



South Grandville Church

SPOTLIGHT

Connect - Equip - Reach

The Life of Grace, Hospice, Dementia and the Resurrection

Part -2 (these articles are to serve two purposes, to allow you a glimpse into Grace Brouwer's life and to show Christ.)

When Joanne and I were courting, I would have coffee with Grace every morning before she and I both went to work. She and I both had to be in early for work, so she invited me to start coming for coffee and breakfast every morning. Many times, my beautiful, better half, Joanne would make breakfast. Through those many mornings and so many other settings, a deep friendship procured.

Many times, Grace asked me many spiritual and theological questions when she was getting to know me. It was never judgmental, I never felt pressured. She showed that she wanted me to have a deepening relationship with the Lord Jesus, simply put she cared. I loved our conversations and her stories.

I remember the day Grace told me about her first husband.

"My first husband Ray died. Ray was the best mechanic anyone could go to in the area, he ran his own business, and he was very, very Protestant Reformed. He was kind and sweet. But most of all he was such a talker and very funny. I loved him.

"What Happened?" I replied.

"I was 28 and it had been 3 years since we had been married. We had just moved to Colorado. We both loved the mountains, camping, we were very adventurous. We were the kind of people that loved the wind in our hair, to have fun, we went to church every Sunday and I even used to smoke."

Joanne interrupted, "Mom! You smoked?! How come you never told me?!"

Grace said, "I didn't keep it from you, I just never found the right time. So much about life is timing. Don't worry I think your ready now. Besides, it was a dumb thing to do. Don't go doing it." Joanne gave a slight funny glance of disapproval, I smiled and laughed. Joanne and I had such a hard time imagining her smoking, but many people smoked back then.

Grace continued, "Anyway, Ray and I worked hard. We finally got some time off and we were going to live it up. We took one motorcycle. Some guy came around the corner and didn't see us. Right along the road on the mountainside, we hit the rock-wall. Next thing I knew I woke up in the hospital. It happened so fast. My knee and parts of my tibia, fibula and femur were shattered. Doctors explained to me days later that my leg was the first successful experimental surgery of its kind. I was put in medical books."

Joanne and I could tell that Grace did not struggle telling us about her accident or her leg. But her lips trembled at what came next.

“He didn’t make it. He was dead on impact. I never said goodbye.”

“What happened? What did you do?” I asked.

“Well, it was awful.” Grace sighed, “I woke up and everything I knew was gone. All my hopes and dreams were dead because they were all made with him in mind.” Tears came down her face, “I shouldn’t cry. I’m so old and it happened so long ago. I was stuck there in a hospital for a month. I had to learn to walk again. I felt numb. Helpless. Hopeless. Nothing seemed to matter anymore. It was a dark time for me. How do you learn to walk again when you’re not sure you want to breathe again? I couldn’t stop crying. Even years later I couldn’t just stop it, the floodgates just came. Things just triggered it. I never got to see his body. I was told that he was unrecognizable. There was a funeral, I couldn’t go to it, I was in a coma.

“The devil seemed to have won at that time in my life. I wish I could tell you I believed in the sovereignty and perfect plan of God at that time. The truth is I couldn’t understand how a good God could do this to me and Ray. The day I left the hospital I picked up only a few things from my apartment. I put them in a car and headed back to Chicago to live with my folks.

“A year later, I went to a large, secluded park in the middle of the night. It was probably illegal, but no one was there. I went there to talk to God for what I thought was the last time. I shook my fist at him. I yelled at him. I let him have it. It was the first time I had talked to God since the accident. It happened on the anniversary of his passing.

“After that I said to myself, I was done believing in God. I was wrong. That night, I had a dream. The Lord spoke powerfully to me through that dream. It was the first time in my life I had a dream like that. It felt so real. In the dream God said I would see my husband again. He also corrected me and told me not to give up. Boy, was I ready to give up. But God was not going to give up on me. That was the first time in my life that I took the resurrection seriously. God overturns death.

“I also learned something that seems to be hard for stubborn people like me to learn. I don’t have to understand why everything happens. Who said you have a right to know? The Bible doesn’t teach that. But neither is there anyone on earth nor is there any philosophy that can prove that I have a right to know why things happen the way they do.

“Has that ever occurred to you? We waste so much of our lives being so angry when that is exactly where the devil wants us. That’s his strategy. To keep us trapped in our pain and suffering.

“That dream, but more so, the Bible and hope of the resurrection taught me how to live free from the devil’s strategy. If death is conquered, and if I am already receiving eternal life and a new body then what am I complaining about? If I get to spend eternity with Ray, Christ, and all my loved ones that have gone before me, then why do I waste my time living in the past if I have eternity ahead of me? This life is as small as the period at the end of a sentence.

“It is not that this life is not important, it is that this life is not all that there is. So now I’m living for eternity because I trust in the sovereignty of God. I figure I can spend the rest of my life, living like I’m dying, I can end up in a ditch somewhere or I can live with the promises of God. I do not have to deny what happened. I simply must accept it. Then say, Okay God. You are using this for a purpose. Now, what is next?

“Everyone’s journey is different. But the goal is always the same. Unfortunately, too many stop at feeling sorry for themselves and never move on. That is the wide path. Not the narrow. Again, it is the wide path that the Devil wants you on. Choose the narrow path, that leads to blessing.

“His promise to me and all of us is that we will see the reversal of all that is wrong made right. Do you know what this means? I won’t have to deal with this stump of a leg anymore. I won’t have to cry anymore because of the pain in my chest every time memory haunts me. Though death has stolen from me, Christ purchased Ray and me at the cross that we might be restored. I will walk again with a new leg, with Christ and Ray.”

These talks with Grace, meant so much because she was trying to teach me about the most important things in life. Loss, grief, love, and the power of the resurrection. She knew so well that Joanne and I would need these teachings to be able to grow into mature Christians. These were not just some nice coffee chats with my future mother-in-law. I was being given gospel truth to live a gospel shaped life.

I was already a Christian, but she was ministering to my soul, nonetheless.

Church Announcements:

- **This Sunday** we look forward to having the Friendship Group lead us in worship. Pastor Rod’s message will be from 1 Corinthians 1:10, focusing on our unity and community as members of the body of Christ.

Next Sunday is the 2nd annual Combined Worship Service of the Grandville CRCs.

Three wonderful congregations, all united in their love for God, will be coming together for this Worship Service in the Calvin Christian High School gymnasium. Rev. Neal Plantinga will bring us the message, and we will celebrate the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper together. Join us to experience the joy of worshipping together! If you are unable to attend in person, view the livestream here: <https://youtube.com/live/rMB0VIqNv7A>

Sunday April 28: We look forward to witnessing the professions of faith of Jaida Jenkins and Avery Netz. Following the service please plan to stay for a short Congregational Meeting to vote on the slate of nominees for Council.

Sunday May 5: During the worship service we plan to draw names for one Elder and two Deacons to serve on Council from the names approved the previous week.

- **Council:** The Council presents the following names for the congregation's approval on April 28 to serve on Council. The names proposed are:
 - For Elder or Deacon - Toby Heberly, Brian Reed, Nate Remijn, and Keith Sikkema.
 - For Deacon only - Dan Bannister and Collin Wilson.

On May 5, as part of the worship service, we will draw the name of one Elder first from the approved names for Elder and then two Deacons will be drawn from the remaining names plus the Deacon only names.

- **Singing Hims Concert:** The annual Spring Concert of the Singing Hims will be here at South Grandville on April 28 at 7PM. A handbell choir called Joyful Notes will also be featured during the concert. Join us for an uplifting evening of praise!

- **Save the date for Thursday, May 2, 7PM - National Day of Prayer:** South Grandville will once again host a prayer service where we will be bringing the needs of our community and the world to our loving Father. Please plan to gather with us at 7PM on Thursday. If you would be willing to offer a prayer during this service, please contact Diane (worshipleader@southgrandvillechurch.org).
- **Pizza Party & Corn Hole Tournament - Wednesday, April 17:** Are you ready to play some Corn Hole? There is a sign up sheet by the Bulletin Board, so pick a partner and put your names down, and if you don't have a partner and want to play, just put your name down. There is also a box to check if you are bringing your boards. If you are not playing and would like to come for pizza and watch the fun, check the box for pizza and watch and say how many. Pizza will be served from 5:45-6:30 and the tournament will begin at 6:30.
- **Christian Education Update – April 2024** Thank you for your faithful giving to the Christian Education fund. Our church is currently supporting 22 students from 11 families. We anticipate one student graduating this spring and at least one new student next year. Our goal for the 2024-2025 school year is \$60,000. That will allow us to continue to support families at the same levels we have used for the past several years. We hope to raise that amount by May 31, since the schools will be asking for firm commitments from the churches in June. As of March 31, we have \$ 49,250 in the Christian Education fund. Christian Education is a huge commitment for all our families. They are so thankful for their church family who is willing to stand with them in their desire for a Christ centered education for their children.
If you have any questions, please contact any member of the team.
Jane Schut, Brian Mann, Steve Maring, Ed Peters, Kathy Vanden Bosch
- **Care Kits for the Homeless** are available in the cubbies by the office. Grab one or more on your way out, then keep it in your car until you see an opportunity to give it away. We'll make more available as needed.
- **Summer Camp Scholarships:** Parents, are you considering the idea of sending your kids to a Christian Summer Camp? South Grandville would like to help! We're offering \$250 scholarships to any South Grandville members attending a Christian Summer Camp. Please contact Diane Reed (616.667.2423 or worshipleader@southgrandvillechurch.org).
- **VBS Volunteers and Snack Donations Needed:** We are in need of a couple more volunteers for VBS in the following areas: Games and Group Leaders/Helpers. Please see the sign up sheets on the bulletin boards if you are able to help in one of those areas. We are also starting to collect donations for snack items for VBS. There is a board in the narthex with fish cut outs. If you are able to help by providing an individually wrapped snack item listed on one of the fish, we would appreciate it. Those items should be placed on the shelf below the tv in the narthex by May 12. If you have any questions, please contact Kristina Netz

- **Severe Weather Policy:** Every spring it is good to review our policy so you know what to plan for if there is inclement weather. Please read this over to remind yourself of our policy.
 - If there is a **Severe Weather Warning**, each group holding a meeting should appoint someone to monitor weather information. For a worship service, the Council will appoint someone to monitor this information.
 - If there is a **Tornado Watch**, that is an announcement that weather conditions are such that there is the possibility of tornadoes in the area, all meetings and services will be canceled, unless the watch is lifted one hour prior to the meeting. (For example: the tornado watch must be lifted by 9:00am or the morning worship service will be canceled.) Every effort will be made to post the closing on WOOD-TV (Channel 8) and on WZZM-TV (Channel 13), as well as via our texting and email services.
 - If there is a **Tornado Warning or Alert** during the service or meeting, the service or meeting will be canceled immediately, and everyone will be asked to take immediate shelter

Schedule:

Lead Pastor Rod Galindo: Phone 616-321-0277 pastorrod@southgrandvillechurch.org

Admin Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 9am-12pm

Diane's Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday & Thursday, 9am-2pm

April Special Offering: Daffodil Ministries

April 7: General Fund, Faith Promise

April 14: General Fund, Christian Education

April 21: General Fund, Baby Pantry

April 28: General Fund, Benevolence

- **Coffee Servers:**

April 14: Keith & Rose Sikkema, Mike & Dee Besteman

April 21: Keith & Mary Beavon, Chad & Kelly Vogel

April 28: Gary & Sue Pipping, Kathy VandenBosch, Kathy Hill

May 5: Steve & Brenda Zuiderveen, Tim & Pat Bosscher

- **Bus Drivers:**

April 14: Chad Vogel

April 21: Brian Reed

April 28: Roger Grit

May 5: Roger Grit

- **Kids Own Worship:**

April 14: Bonnie Williams - Jesus Heals a Lame Man

April 21: combined service at Calvin HS

April 28: Nicole Dornbos - Jesus Feeds the 5000

May 5: Mary Rozendal - Jesus Heals 10 Lepers

- **Nursery:**
 April 14: Rachael Remijn, Taylor Dornbos
 April 21: combined service at Calvin HS
 April 28: Cali Stob, Rosa Padilla
 May 5: Christine Padilla, Maison Pipping
- **Hospitality:**
 April 14: Steve & Linda Schroeder
 April 21: Steve & Marla Maring
 April 28: Steve & Marla Maring
 May 5: Jerry & Sally King

Calendar:

- April 15: Council meets followed by Elders and Deacons Meetings 6:30pm
 April 17: Pizza Party & Corn Hole Tournament 5:45pm
 April 21: Combined Worship Service @Calvin Christian 10am
 Youth Group 5-7
 April 28: Singing Hims Concert - 7pm
 May 2: National Day of Prayer Service 7pm

Happy Birthday:

- April 16 - Greta Vanderheide, Penelope Remijn
 April 21 - Marge Kosters
 April 22 - Brenda Zuiderveen
 April 24 - Kathie Heberly
 April 25 - Larry Bengelink
 April 26 - Victoria Ruler
 April 27 - Pat Hulsebus
 April 28 - Bernie Byker, Lauren Dertien
 April 29 - Jim Vos
 April 30 - Judy Wolters

Prayer List

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." Phillipians 4:6

South Grandville Prayer Line 616-532-5413 (option 4)

Requests:

- Council Members: Jim Hoekstra, Marc Faasse, Nicole Dornbos, Brian Mann
- Military: Lt Col Brian Sikkema
- Missionary of the Month: Pastor Tony & Stacey Meyer, Madrid, Spain
- Members: Wilma Levering, Bonnie Williams, Becky Wilson, Doug Depuyt

Help & Healing:

- **Betty Bengelink (1)** fell and broke her hip. On Tuesday she was moved to Health Bridge Rehabilitation for therapy. Pray that she is able to recover mobility and return home and pray for Larry as he continues to support and care for Betty.
- **Ed Brower (1)** was hospitalized with concern regarding back pain. Pray that the doctors find answers and a direction forward regarding the pain. Pray that all procedures done may yield results that are good news of a plan of healing and restoration.
- **Pastor Will Hensen** has experienced some reduction in his pain. His second treatment is scheduled for Monday the 15th. Pray that the treatments will continue to reduce the swelling of the lymph nodes in his abdominal area so that he will have less pain.
- **Nella Homan (2)** is continuing physical therapy following her knee replacement surgery. We join her in praying for patience and continued healing and in prayers of praise for pain relief and healing.
- **Pat Joustra (5)** was hospitalized this week with concerns regarding her kidneys. Please pray for a swift recovery and that the appropriate measures are taken for her health. Pray for support, care and wisdom from the Lord for Pat and Dave during this time of medical need.
- **Bill VanZalen (1)** continues to receive hospice care in his room at Waterford.
- **Roger Westveer** (Hope CRC), age 88, passed peacefully from this life into the presence of his Lord and Savior on Thursday, April 11, 2024. A memorial service will be held at 1:30 pm on Sunday, April 14, 2024 at Matthyse Kuiper DeGraaf Funeral Home (Grandville) with Rev. Dale Fopma officiating.
- **Judy Wolters' (5)** appointment with the neurologist was postponed until April 25th. Please pray for patience for Judy as she awaits this appointment.
- Please pray for the Calvin Christian students and staff who left on Wednesday night for New York. **Angelisse Vogel, Lexi Rickers, Trevor Dornbos and Carter Netz** are on the trip. Pray for health and strength for them as they share the gift of music during several performances and tour the city, and for a safe return trip on Sunday morning.