

## **Agenda**

### **Council of Elders Meeting with Grace Group**

**December 15, 2016 at 6:00pm and 7:00 p.m.**

**Discussion Leader: Gordon Kesting**

- I. Opening Prayer Time (Dave)
- II. Overview Remarks (Gordon)
- III. Grace Group status discussion
  - A. Value of Grace Group as a “Supported Ministry” (Pastor Marty)
  - B. Explanation/definition of “Supported Ministry” (Pastor Michael)
  - C. Implementation of Grace Group as a Supported Ministry (Pastor Michael)
  - D. Q&A
- IV. Closing Prayer (Dave)

#### *Background Information*

Grace Group, a Home School co-op composed mostly of deeply committed families from BCC, has been part of the church for many years. Historically, they have fielded their own leadership team, collected dues from families/students, set and purchased curriculum, vetted teachers, and so forth. In 2008, under the direction of Pastor Nace, they classified themselves as a Life Group so they could be a more intrinsic part of the BCC ministry. This unique arrangement had its advantages when the church was smaller; however, as their ministry and that of the church grew, it became important to fine-tune their ministry classification so it would better reflect how the church is organizationally structured.

Change, of course, is never easy, and this needed organizational change was no exception. After several informative meetings between Grace Group and pastoral leadership during 2016 to address a re-classification of Grace Group, it became apparent communication was not optimal. In order to enhance and bring clarity to the church’s position and to address concerns from the Grace Group leaders, the Elder Council felt it prudent to meet on December 15, 2016 with the leaders. After this meeting, the Council deemed it important to speak to all families in this viable home school program. During this time, the Elders and pastoral leadership presented why re-classification was warranted at this ministry juncture, and they fielded numerous questions. The meetings concluded with a spirit of unity and camaraderie.

## Minutes of Council Meeting

In attendance at the Grace Group Leader session of this Council Meeting

<u>From Grace Group</u>	<u>Elders/Pastors</u>
Amy Gilmore	Pastor Marty
Chris Grose	Pastor Michael
Jacqueline Grose	Bob Ashton
Terry Post	Richard Dick
Kay Twaddell	Curt Hammill
Wendie Green	Gordon Kesting
	Allen Miller
	Dave Pennington

The same leaders attended the family meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Dave opened with prayer at 6:07 p.m. and at 7:00 p.m.

Gordon opened both meetings by establishing the importance of clear communication, followed by a deep commitment to strive for unity within the body in relation to Paul's words in Ephesians 4:2-3, "*with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, <sup>3</sup>being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*" He next clarified how leadership views the various ministries of the church. We have core or highly integrated ministries and supported ministries. The former, like Breakaway and Basecamp, is intrinsically responsible to a pastoral staff leader (viz., weekly reports, budget analysis, team meetings, ministry action plans, vetting of materials and leaders, and so forth). The latter, like Tae Kwon Do classes and Classical Conversations, are not directly responsible to a pastor for their respective ministries, although they can have a pastor as a point of contact. This latter group, by definition, enjoys more autonomy and flexibility to develop their unique ministry. Gordon, then, stated that Grace Group better fits the supported ministry, as opposed to the integrated ministry, classification.

Next, Gordon described some pragmatic details of implementation:

- For the next year, everything will continue as it has in the past; however, in the fall of 2017, a phased-in estimated increase of \$20-25 per child will go into effect. This fee will be negotiated annually based on room usage.
- BCC will assist families who cannot afford the increase.
- Grace Group leadership will need to establish its own bank account and accounting system.
- Grace Group will need to purchase an insurance policy, and BCC will cover these costs for the first year to assist in the transition.
- Rooms will be highly subsidized by the church to keep costs down.

He closed his comments by underscoring how seriously elders and pastors take their leadership roles, and he directed everyone to remember the divine counsel of Hebrews 13:16-17 to follow leaders.

In both meetings, Pastor Marty explained the reason for the change from an operations perspective. Since his arrival, he has worked to create an optimal organizational structure of the ministry team. With the church tripling in size over the last eight years, and the staff growing in a commensurate fashion, achieving this structure has been challenging and pivotal. Many ministry changes have been made to make sure the right integrated ministries are positioned under the right pastoral leadership. Where Grace Group is concerned, they have not historically functioned as part of the integrated team; therefore, Pastor Marty believes it most logical for them to be a supported ministry. He also underscored how he does not have the pastoral team in place to oversee a ministry like Grace Group. Seeing them as a supported ministry is, then, most appropriate.

Pastor Michael spoke next in the two meetings. He emphasized four points regarding the meaning of a supported ministry at BCC:

- It has the full backing of the BCC leadership
- It is allowed to operate at BCC
- It is in alignment with the values and priorities of BCC
- It is separate and distinct from fully integrated ministries of BCC, which require daily pastoral supervision and staff coordination. Also, supported ministries are allowed more autonomy.

He also stated that because of Grace Group's long history at BCC, is allowed subsidized facility usage (to be negotiated annually by the Grace Group leadership and the BCC staff). The Grace Group facility usage is based upon the needs of the primary BCC missions and requirements. Financial charges for use of BCC facility rooms and areas are to be negotiated annually. The total charges will vary annually dependent upon total rooms requested and BCC requirements. As a supported ministry, Grace Group will maintain its own accounting, separate from BCC staff and banking accounts. He also noted that BCC will help parents who need assistance with the annual charge by directing them to our benevolence ministry. He concluded by stating that BCC values all forms of education-- homeschool, private school and public school-- equally. Members of the Council affirmed that conclusion.

Numerous questions and comments were fielded in each meeting. Here are some statements which reflect where BCC and Grace Group stand in this new re-classified ministry structure:

- BCC stands with and supports Grace Group and welcomes them to continue the work God has called them to.
- BCC will work closely with Grace Group in the next year to help them with the transition.

- BCC will provide modular units as long as we can for high school classes; however, this will change once the modulars are removed in the winter of 2017/spring 2018 for new construction. At that point, space needs / allocation will need to be reassessed.
- BCC staff is readily available to help Grace Group however they can in the transition period.
- A staff person will need to be chosen as a point of contact for the Grace Group leadership team.
- BCC will provide a list of Grace Group workers/teachers who have already been vetted to work at BCC. Any future Group Group workers/teachers, who have not been vetted by BCC (to work or volunteer at BCC) will need vetting through Grace Group protocol.
- BCC desires a long-term relationship with Grace Group because of the valuable work they do for God's kingdom.
- Grace Group will remain visible on the church web site.
- Should parents associated with Grace Group desire to organize a Life Group as a part of BCC's Life Group program, then that group will fall under the leadership of the BCC Life Group Director. Grace Group's staff point of contact will not be the Life Group Leader.
- Grace Group will need to establish a 501c3 classification.
- Once Grace Group signs a 2017 contract, BCC will work to ensure all require classrooms and other contracted spaces remain available. Construction requirements will have priority, but alternative Grace Group sites will be sought as needed.

After the pastors and elders fielded questions, Dave closed in prayer. The final meeting concluded at 8:35p.m. A spirit of unity and camaraderie resulted from the important time together.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Pennington  
Clerk of the Council  
January 24, 2017