

Works of Grace

GRACE COVENANT INTERNATIONAL

April/May 2025



The Lord continues to impart vision and favor to Value Unconditional under the directorship of Geony Rucker. The focus of VU is to serve trafficked and traumatized individuals in the Kansas City area and beyond. Recently, God provided for VU to move into their new leased space enabling them to add staff and multiply their ministries.



Geony on the job!

Our GCI Prayer Team visited Value Unconditional's new ministry space in April. There were prayers and prophecies over Geony and the ministry's new season. From left to right: Sara Moser, Terri Gann, Pam Brown, Marquis Harris, Linda Wagers, Carla Peniston and VU Director Geony Rucker.

Addition & Multiplication

We rejoice in the Lord for the additions and multiplications that He is doing within our GCI Ministry Family. The new additions include a house-church plant led by Pastors Marquis and Makayla Harris in south Kansas City, MO. At the end of May, they will have their first baptism service. We have welcomed missionaries Guido and Kim Orellana who serve orphans in Ecuador. We've connected with Pastor Thomas Omenta and we are on the ground floor of serving churches in Kenya. We have a mission team going to serve the deaf in Mexico in May. The afore mentioned house church is taking a team of 14 to serve in the Dominican Republic in June. (Ronny, who is a Dominican young man serving with our DR Team, recently gave his life to Christ.) Pastor Kevin Clancey (The Firehouse Churches-Washington) made a ministry touch to The Well-Waterford, CA in early May. Talking to some of our pastors, they said the houses of worship were full on Easter. There have been baptisms and a growing hunger for God.

Value Unconditional is adding and multiplying. VU offers faith-based support to trafficked and traumatized individuals. In February, Geony met with some of the Kansas City Police Department's social workers and learned about their current needs. Effective immediately, the VU Advocacy team will be supporting two patrol divisions when they receive referrals of minors or adults facing sexual exploitation, sextortion or sex trafficking. VU Advocates will be dispatched to patrol divisions, or to local area hospitals where victims are being taken for medical care. VU services have grown so much, they moved into a new space. It is a strategic location with 2,500 square feet of leased space (2.5 times more). It is within five minutes of KCPD North Patrol and FBI Field Office (10 minutes from our GCI Office). It has two separate rooms that can be used for larger groups. It is only 10 minutes from their equine therapy. There is space to provide resources for victims and their immediate family. Look what the Lord has done!

Amazing Life Touches!



Ronny with Godson Jude, Tyler & Callie's newest addition. Below: Ronny praying for children at the Bread of Life Ministry Center.



“Ronny has been a part of the Bread of Life Children’s outreach (Dominican Republic) since he was 4 years old. He grew up in a home where nobody attended church, so his only exposure to Christianity was through Bread of Life. When Ronny was 12 years old, he had an experience where he felt the Lord was calling him to be a pastor one day. He held onto this memory even though he was not yet walking with the Lord. When he was 18 years old, he was working for a company that set up speakers at popular nightclubs for big concerts and parties. He was very much living in that crowd and immersed in the sin that surrounded him. Ronny is the Godson of Tyler and Callie and considers them family, so during this season, he would still come over weekly for family dinners and to take his “little siblings” out for ice cream or to the park. It was on one of those visits that Tyler convinced him to stop working in the Capital and come work for the ministry as Tyler’s assistant. He agreed and even said “I’ve been waiting for years for you to ask!” For two years he worked for the ministry but still never made a declaration to give his life to the Lord. We prayed for him daily, brought him to church, invited him to Bible studies, shared the gospel with him, and just loved him through the season he was in. In those two years, he experienced an unplanned pregnancy with his girlfriend and ended up getting full custody of his daughter, Yerianny. We witnessed many moments where God was clearly touching his heart, calling him into a relationship but he resisted. He formed a sweet connection with Pastor Pedro from Peru while at the GCI World Conference last year. Pedro told him “God is pulling you towards him, but the world is pulling you away.” It was at the GCI Peru Conference this year, (January-2025) that Ronny first experienced the power of the Holy Spirit, an experience that left him questioning a lot of choices he was making. Two months later, a local pastor saw Ronny in the street and said, “I had a dream that I was supposed to invite you to church tonight.” Ronny agreed to go to the service and officially gave his life to the Lord that night. He walked into Bread of Life the next morning a completely changed man who radiates the love of the Father. He is constantly worshiping the Lord, teaching the children at Bread of Life to pray, and eagerly attends church and their new member’s class. We are currently picking a day for his upcoming baptism. The same week he got saved, the nightclub where he used to work installing speaker systems suffered a tremendous tragedy when the roof fell in, killing over two hundred people. Ronny shared with Tyler the next day that was his scheduled night he used to work at the nightclub. He shared “It’s incredible to think that I left a good paying job just to work for a ministry, when I wasn’t even a Christian yet, not even knowing that almost exactly two years later God was going to save my life both physically and spiritually in the same week.” We are praising God for the beautiful story He has written through Ronny’s life and for allowing us to be a part of it.” ~DR Missionary-Callie Franca

Grateful for Godly Investment!



In April, Connie and I were blessed to visit Pastor Forrest, Brenda and Brian Williams at their home in Columbus, OH.

Pastor Forrest and Brenda planted and led the church in St. Joseph, MO through which Connie and I were saved in 1974. A few years later, the Lord called us into full-time ministry. Forrest and Brenda mentored us and pointed us toward Asbury Seminary for further ministry training. They had a huge heart for evangelism, discipleship and missions. They imparted those values to us. We were able to honor and bless them for their investment.



Forrest and Brenda were also instrumental in connecting Kim, Guido and Sophia Orellana (Missionaries-Ecuador) to GCI. They are now located in Columbus, OH as they continue to serve orphans in Ecuador. We visited them in their home. We say in GCI: “Ministry flows through relationships.” History reflects His Kingdom connections!

Light through the Bars!



I was in prison and you visited me. -Jesus

Walter Vega ministers in both a women's and men's prison in Paraguay with GCI. Through his faith-based reentry program, he offers the prisoners faith and life training. This was Graduation Day. The women received a certificate of course completion and a Bible. Lives are being changed! Thanks to all who support this ministry. This work was founded by missionaries Angel and Malia Hernandez. In July, they will visit Walter and the ministry works in Paraguay.

~Serving at The Well~

Pastor Kevin Clancey (The Firehouse Churches-Washington) planted Living Hope Christian Fellowship years ago in Oakdale, CA. His time in that area produced the planting of three other churches, one of which is The Well of Waterford, CA. The founding pastors were Ed and Kristi Rapinchuk. The church has made an impact in the community. While there have been the ups and down of some challenges, the Lord is regrouping and positioning The Well for its next season of ministry. In May, Pastor Kevin met with the leadership team (below) and ministered at the church.



"Oh Brother!" Complicated Family and Undeniable Truth

By Dallas Elder

One of the realities of life is that family relationships can be complicated. It was absolutely true for Jesus and his family. Often we want to place Jesus in a category exempt from the life challenges that we face. After all, He was the Son of God. However, he was also the Son of Man. He fully encountered the rivalries, rejections and misunderstandings that can be part of family relationships. You may not want to call it controversy, but a Virgin Birth by an engaged couple is a little hard to explain. Mary, questioned "How can this happen, since I'm a virgin?" Joseph, certainly had no explanation. He was willing to dismiss Mary quietly. Angels of the Lord convinced each of them the child was of God. He would be the Savior of the world. Yeah, they were only dealing with a one-time supernatural event in world history! How do you explain that to others? How do you explain it to your children who would come later through natural birth. How would you share the story of the half-brother to the rest of his siblings? Think about parenting responsibility. Well, He's our son, and He's also God's Son. Talk about navigating the twists and turns of family.

Then there is doing life with a middle schooler and his siblings. *"Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up to the festival, according to the custom. After the festival was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him." (LK 2:41-45)* It kind of reminds me of the Christmas movie "Home Alone." "Where's Kevin?!" Joseph, Mary and family traveled a day back to Jerusalem. They searched for Jesus for three days and found him in the Temple. So for five days, 12 year old Jesus was missing. Jesus responded to his searching parents: *"Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he was saying to them. Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart." (LK 2:49-51)* *Continued >>>*

GCI Midyear Conference August 11-12

at LifePoint Church-Oakdale, CA
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The scripture tells us that Jesus had a least six siblings. There were four brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Jude. He also had a least two (unnamed) sisters. At 30 years old, the Father led Jesus to launch into His ministry. The folks in the hometown church were offended at His anointing. ***“Coming to his hometown, he began teaching the people in their synagogue, and they were amazed. “Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?” they asked. “Isn’t this the carpenter’s son? Isn’t his mother’s name Mary, and aren’t his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? Aren’t all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?” And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own town and in his own home.” (MT 13:54-57)*** You can imagine there was some fallout on the family. Can you hear the sibling response? “Brother has gotten all weird. We’re feeling the splash-back on the family. We’re getting the negative vibe in the neighborhood. Oh brother!”

“Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, “He is out of his mind. ... Then Jesus’ mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, “Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you.” “Who are my mother and my brothers?” he asked. Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, “Here are my mother and my brothers!” (Mark 3:20-21, 31-34) It appears Joseph had already passed. Mama Mary and the brothers are trying their best to care for older brother. They felt the need to do a family intervention. You wonder if the saying “Oh Brother!” originated with Jesus’ family. “He’s preaching. He’s not eating. He’s obsessed with his supposed mission. He’s gone off the deep end!” While His Mother and brothers didn’t understand it, in essence Jesus was saying, “You are my family and, I must be about my mission of gathering the Family of God. You are my blood family. These will be my family through My Blood by faith. As time went on, the ministry of Jesus was getting more exposure, but He was cautious. His brothers encouraged him to go all in. You wonder about their motivation.

“After this, Jesus went around in Galilee. He did not want to go about in Judea because the Jewish leaders there were looking for a way to kill him. But when the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles was near, Jesus’ brothers said to him, “Leave Galilee and go to Judea, so that your disciples there may see the works you do. No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world.” For even his own brothers did not believe in him.” (JN 7:1-5)

The brothers urged Jesus: “If you want to be a rock star preacher, go to Judea. Get into the space where you can have maximum exposure and recognition. Clearly, you have big ego needs. We’re not holding you back. Go be Jesus Christ Superstar!” ***“For even his own brothers didn’t believe in him.”*** Yep, doing family can be complicated.

The next time that we see Mother Mary is at the Cross. No brothers onsite. Was it fear mixed with unbelief or just unbelief? There’s always so much drama with “brother!” Jesus assigned her care to the Apostle John who was present. Jesus died. He was buried. On the third day, He arose from the dead. Resurrection Sunday! He then goes on His “appearances tour.” There are a number of brief post-resurrection appearances. There’s one in particular that may get overlooked. The Apostle Paul gives this summary.

“...He appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.” (I Cor. 15:3-8) There was the apparent sibling rivalry and clear unbelief, but Resurrected Jesus came to James. He believes! “Oh Brother!” Read the Book of James and you see that he was a “Show me the facts” guy! Jesus did. The resurrection is, in the words of Josh McDowell, “The evidence that demands a verdict.” Interesting, Mary and all the brothers are gathered in the upper room, praying for the Holy Spirit. James became the leader of the church in Jerusalem. He also became a martyr. Jewish leaders came to James and demanded him to tell the people that Jesus was not the Messiah. He refused and they killed him. Note how James begins his book, ***“A servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.”*** Undeniable truth!

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