

STORIES OF HOPE

PASTOR'S MEMO



Around the Kirk dinner table you can often find us sharing a moment from our day when we saw God show up. Sometimes, just to mix it up, I'll even get more specific; asking everyone to pick something "orange" or "blue" from their day for which they can give God thanks. The point is to live on the look-out, expecting God to be present and busy in us and around us in everyday moments of life. Because He IS! And... to learn to give God thanks for the many provisions with which He graciously fills our day, even when days are hard. And sometimes they are. As these stories are shared, anticipation grows in the whole family. This is the heart behind the launch of "Stories of Hope". Each month we'll capture moments in the life of Hope Church where God has been busy in and through us. Stories of **MULTIPLY** where people are **discovering grace**—either for the first time or in a deeper way, **growing together** in deepening friendship and

Christ-like maturity, and **making disciples**—pursuing new ones and equipping each other to live on pursuit. These stories will give God His due and begin to shape who we are becoming. So be on the look-out. Live expectantly! Pray that God would write hope into your story, and into ours.

On the Journey!

Stephen

GROWING TOGETHER: THE BROWN FAMILY

Our family has seen tremendous spiritual growth this year, especially in our children. Last summer, our daughter balked at praying, but at one of our last TNT sessions, she led our small group in prayer. The words just



poured out of her and what a sweet sound it was! Our son has found others in church that love him with the love

of Christ despite his quirks. They might even like his quirks! His faith is deepening as he learns solid truths about baptism, salvation, giving, and other foundational Christian blocks. He has even decided to be baptized! My husband and I are growing as God has been showing us how to train our children God's way. God is amazing!

DISCOVERING GRACE: BRENDA VARGA

Aspire is a kaleidoscope of God Stories as each month a woman shares her God Story. Here's one piece of mine. Having been out of church for a while, I was looking for a way to reconnect with godly women. My heart's desire was to find a spiritual mentor to walk the road of restoration with me. I chose Aspire because of the childcare and trusted God with the rest. After attending for the first time in October, God turned my world upside down. A woman reached out to me. During the ensuing two months of sorrow, she checked in with me and prayed for me. Out of that time a connection was made, a friendship was born. God gave me my heart's desire of a godly mentor, and the kaleidoscope of God Stories at Aspire goes on producing breathtaking pictures of His unending love and limitless grace.



GROWING TOGETHER: LISTENING

Listening for Heaven's Sake is an equipping experience that teaches us how to connect with and serve others as we grow in the Nine Priorities of following Jesus. Over two hundred people at Hope have taken this workshop. They



learned that listening is much more than allowing another to talk while waiting for a chance to respond. Listening is paying full attention to others and welcoming them into our very beings. The beauty of

listening is that those who are listened to start taking their words more seriously and discover their own true selves. Here are some insights people have taken from the workshop:

- *"We discovered in our small group practice sessions that the more we listened to each other, the more we learned. This motivates me to be way more intentional in my listening."*
- *"This is a great first step in improving my relationships. I wish I had done this twenty years ago."*
- *"It was very beneficial to experience how listening can take a conversation to a deeper level."*

MAKING DISCIPLES: THE PFEIL FAMILY

Our Ministry Partners, Jon and Sarah Pfeil, serve with Mission to the World in the world's largest city, Tokyo, Japan. Tokyo is home to 36,000,000 people. Jon and Sarah have a new church-plant called Grace Harbor that meets bi-monthly. An average 46 adults and 25 kids attend each meeting. Recently, due to Grace Harbor's pursue effort, two attenders made a commitment to follow Jesus. In a recent newsletter, Jon and Sarah announced Grace Harbor Church will be launching



weekly worship services this Easter Sunday, April 5. From April to June, the Pfeil family will be in the US for a home ministry

assignment. They will join us on Sunday, April 19. Please consider praying for the Pfeil family and their ministry. They are asking that we pray for the church launch, the new Jesus followers, and their home assignment.

MAKING DISCIPLES: TRIADS

At Hope Church we are committed to growing and helping others grow as followers of Jesus. One key strategy for this is the new "Multiply Triads," groups of three men or three women who embark on a 12-18 month group experience. Twenty-five triads are meeting. Here are a few things we are hearing:



- *"I have been in home groups for decades, but in a few short months I've gotten more authentic in my triad than I have in any of my home groups."*
- *"Driving to my triad I decided I wasn't going to confess something that I knew I needed to confess, but God wouldn't let me hide it so I went there. There was honest sharing, tears were shed... it was amazing!"*
- *"I've been talking for years about finding a place where I can be building relationships with people who aren't Christians... but now, because of encouragement from my triad, I'm actually doing it!"*

DISCOVERING GRACE: IN JUNIOR HIGH

Since the JH fall retreat this past August, the Holy Spirit has been seriously moving in one 8th grade boy, Matthew Mapati. It was there, at our "Anomaly" retreat, that the vision of Jesus broke into his life and for the first time he saw his need for a savior. Since then, he's shown some encouraging evidences of God producing fruit. He's had an incredible boldness in sharing his victories and defeats with sin which challenges every Christian with what it means to link deeply, be vulnerable, and battle sin. He has enthusiastically modeled what it looks like to be in love with Jesus, coming up to David Wilson nearly every week with another story of how God revealed His grace to him. God is doing some amazing work in this 8th grader's life. *Soli Deo Gloria.*

