



**grace central**

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*Senior Pastor Information Packet*

# *Welcome*

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Hello from Grace Central!

Thank you for expressing interest in learning more about our church family! We pray this packet is helpful in your discernment of our open senior pastor position.

Grace Central began public worship services on February 29, 2004. (Yes, you read that correctly—a leap day Sunday.) Evangelist & Teaching Elder Greg Blosser has served as Grace Central's planter and pastor ever since. We are thankful for his expository preaching of Scripture, a gift that Grace Central continues to hold as a priority in future senior pastors. By God's grace, we are in a healthy place to be able to celebrate Greg's answering of God's call to plant a new congregation and begin the search for a new senior pastor, as well as look ahead to the possibility of hiring an associate pastor for our growing youth ministry.

Our church building is located just north of downtown Columbus, in an area of the city known as Victorian Village (or Short North District). The Short North district and surrounding areas of Columbus have seen an incredible amount of growth in the past ten years and shows no sign of slowing. We continue to seek out ways to improve our church building to be used both by our ministries as well as a host site for ministries, organizations and programs our congregation is involved with throughout Columbus.

Given the current makeup of the Grace Central church family, our desire is to call a senior pastor with clear gifts in scripture-centric preaching, teaching, and discipleship. All ministries and programs of Grace Central are run by members of Grace Central. One part-time staff member provides administrative support and operations oversight.



# Welcome

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Our core values seek to demonstrate that Grace Changes Everything:

***Live the Gospel***

***Love the City***

***Seek the Kingdom***

***Do the Mission***

***Be the Church***

We are thankful for your interest in the possibility of receiving a new call to serve as senior pastor at Grace Central. It is our hope that this packet will be of help and we invite you to reach out to Pastoral Search Committee for consideration of next steps.

Take Good Care & God Bless,

**Michael Mattes**

Co-Chair of PSC, Ruling Elder

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**Bruce Beitman**

Co-Chair of PSC, Deacon

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# *Core Commitments of the Elders*

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## **Communication**

We are committed to the two-way street of communication—our communication with the congregation as well as our accessibility for the congregation to communicate with us. We want to be visible, approachable, and available.

## **Discipleship**

The primary call of the church is to make disciples. We are committed to equipping home group and ministry team leaders, as well as congregational trainings (ex: new members classes, communicant member, Sunday school classes).

## **Diversity (through Missions)**

Rather than attempt to reinvent the wheel, we will begin partnering with a diversity of faithful churches and ministries in Columbus that already have up and running opportunities for us to come alongside celebrate Christ's love with one another and for the city.

## **Fellowship**

We want to foster a church body that lives in unity with one another, builds one another up, and breaks bread together as members of Christ's church. We give support and encouragement to deacons to facilitate new & regular fellowship gatherings.

## **Shepherding**

The elders will be proactive in caring for our members as families and individuals over the next year, so that we can discuss how they are doing with spiritual health, well-being, vocation, family, marriage, and other aspects of life together.

## **Youth**

At the end of 2019 we launched a Comprehensive Campaign to raise fund for the hiring of an Associate Pastor for Youth Ministry. In preparation for that hire, we will continue to seek ways to meet the needs of our youth and establish a youth ministry.



## *Congregation*

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Grace Central has a healthy diversity in terms of age and profession, with a higher concentration of young professionals and academics, and particularly married couples with school and pre-school aged children. Families are also diverse in terms of preferred educational environment, which includes a mix of those choosing public school, private school, and homeschooling. Due to the church's proximity to the Ohio State University main campus, the congregation tends to have a number of graduate and medical students and physician residents.

As a developing city, the Columbus population is more transient than some other major cities. The "typical" adult Columbus resident is not a Columbus native, although many come from other parts of Ohio. For a church congregation only twenty years old, Grace Central has been fortunate to have many long-term members (>10 years). However, it is also common for students and young professionals to relocate to and from Columbus. Grace Central is likewise continually welcoming new attendees as well as "sending off" those leaving the area, many of whom are often heavily involved in church ministries. This creates both great blessings and challenges in terms of church growth and stability.

Due to our building's location, the congregation of Grace Central represents many of the neighborhoods as well as universities of Columbus. We are continually inviting in new families and young adults, with baptisms of babies into the covenant community happening on a regular basis. We are also frequently commissioning graduate students and higher education professionals to their next vocation in the world of higher education. The coming and going of young families and those in higher education set the rhythms of Grace Central on the academic calendar. Grace Central has a handful of mature Christian families providing encouragement to our young families and children and stability for the continual ebbs and flows of the Grace Central community.



## *Church Health*

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By God's great mercy, Grace Central has come through the pandemic with a renewed excitement and commitment to faithfully "be the church" in Columbus. There is a deep desire among our congregation to grow in faith and fellowship with one another. To that end, we are seeking a senior pastor candidate that proclaims the Word every Sunday morning, and prioritizes discipleship throughout the week.

Grace Central has been and will continue to care well for the financial needs of our senior pastor. Our monthly giving has been able to meet the various expenses of the church, allowing us to eliminate and alleviate needs in the congregation and in our community as they are made known to us. Through a comprehensive campaign Grace Central held prior to and during COVID, we have \$70,000 set aside to move forward with hiring an assistant pastor soon after we hire a new senior pastor.

Our Sunday morning attendance is almost back up to pre-COVID numbers, with an average of about 100-120 in attendance. About 40% of the current congregation, members and non-members, is actively involved in a home group. About 50% of Grace Central's current membership is actively involved in a ministry team.

While we have lost some of the long-term families who faithfully served over the past few years (for various reasons), Grace Central also has experienced considerable growth of new people and families beginning to attend regularly on Sundays and get connected with a home group and/or ministry team. This growth has infused excitement and opportunities for Grace Central even amidst a senior pastoral transition.



# *The City*

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Columbus, Ohio is a large, growing city, ranked #14 in the U.S. in terms of population (city proper) and #32 with an overall metropolitan area population of ~1.2 million. Serving as the state's capital, Columbus is also home to The Ohio State University, and as such, the State of Ohio and OSU are the two largest employers. In terms of private employers, Columbus has a diverse economy with several of the largest concentrated in healthcare, banking, and insurance.

As a relatively “young” city, Columbus is flourishing with a vibe similar to Charlotte, Nashville, or Austin, Texas, but with a distinctly Midwestern ethos. Columbus has a vibrant arts and music scene, many spacious parks, and countless “foodie” destinations—from five-star restaurants to ethnic food trucks and world-famous ice cream. Columbus is a fashion destination, with a number of national brands calling the city home. For children, the award-winning Center of Science and Industry (COSI), Columbus Zoo & Aquarium, and Zoombezi Bay water park are among the favorite destinations.

In sports, Ohio State Buckeye football is king, with over 100,000 fans filling the Horseshoe on Saturdays in the fall. Other OSU sports also provide some family-friendly more budget-friendly live sports viewing. Columbus is home to the Blue Jackets, of the National Hockey League and the Crew SC in Major League Soccer, as well as the minor league (AAA) Columbus Clippers.



## *Church History*

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Grace Central began in February of 2004 with the conviction that the ancient beliefs and practices of our Christian faith should be communicated sincerely through the context of genuine friendship, and in the language of our city's culture. After almost two decades, we still believe this story, and it's still making a difference in our lives.

Since its inception, Grace Central has enjoyed the leadership of Greg Blosser, who planted our church along with his wife Charity in 2004. Grace Central is part of a legacy of church plants, starting with Northwest Presbyterian, who desired to be a reproducing church. Grace Central planted Hope Presbyterian Church which now serves the Grandview neighborhood. God has grown a church that helped plant churches that in turn, formed the Columbus Metro Presbytery.

Greg has served our congregation faithfully as a shepherd and teacher of the Word for the last twenty years, and we are so grateful for him. We are saying goodbye to Greg, Charity and their five wonderful kids with love and joy, as they move on to their work in Naples and we begin an exciting new chapter at Grace Central. The depth of teaching and pastoral care that Greg has brought to our congregation is something for which we will be forever grateful, and we look forward to what God has planned for us as we move into the future.





## *Confessional*

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As a Christian church, Grace Central looks to the ancient scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as our only rule of faith and practice, and together with churches throughout the centuries, we affirm the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed as accurate expressions of the Christian faith.

As a confessional church and a member congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America, we subscribe to the Westminster Standards as a faithful summary of the teachings of the Bible. We also value other Reformed confessions such as the Heidelberg and New City catechisms.

Since our inception as a church, Grace Central has been blessed to hear the Word of God preached faithfully and lovingly. As we look to call our next pastor, we believe that God wants the full counsel of his Word to continue to be preached here: powerfully, winsomely, and in a way that moves his people toward works of faithful service out of a desire to worship him in their daily lives.



# *Ministries*

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To faithfully live out our mission and values, Grace Central is committed to doing the good work God has given us by inviting members to actively participate in the life of the church through engagement in worship, home groups and ministry teams. All three of these areas are currently led by dedicated members (not staff) of the Grace Central family.

## **Worship**

Grace Central is committed to a clear liturgical movement every Sunday morning that welcomes the congregation into the grand narrative of scripture and assures that the Gospel is presented with an opportunity to respond through singing, readings, prayer, and confession. We believe the sacraments ought to be a regular part of our Sunday morning worship with the Lord's Supper practiced weekly.

We are committed to worship music which invites us into adoration, repentance, and thanksgiving. Our worship teams are not put up on a stage to remove any sense of performance and invite the congregation into song through their music gifts. This creates an atmosphere of reverence to God the Father, faith in Jesus Christ our Lord & Savior and openness to the Holy Spirit who draws us into a heart of worship together.

## **Home Groups**

We are committed to being a church of home groups, not simply a church with home groups. Throughout the week we meet in each other's homes to fellowship, study Scripture and pray together. These small group communities of Grace Central are an essential lifeline for members of the Grace Central family, in times of distress as well as in times of celebration. Facilitators and hosts are in regular communication with the elders for pastoral oversight and direction.



# *Ministries*

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## **Ministry Teams**

Grace Central can create and cultivate ministry teams as needs arise within the Grace Central family. Outside of home groups, our ministry teams are responsible for serving every facet of Grace Central's life together both on Sunday mornings and throughout the week.

Our current Ministry Teams include:

**Audio/Visual**

**Children's Church**

**Greeting**

**Missions & Outreach**

**Men's Ministry**

**Hospitality**

**Nursery**

**Women's Ministry**

**Worship**

**Youth Ministry**



# *Leadership*

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## **Session**

Max Conrad – Ruling Elder

Vince Roadcap – Ruling Elder

Mike Mattes – Ruling Elder, Director of Operations

## **Deacon Board**

Bruce Beitman – Chairman

Eric Harris – Facilities

Joel Vaughn – Finance

Bryan Conrad – Congregational Care



## *What We're Looking For*

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Grace Central PCA is seeking a senior pastor to lead our congregation in growth as disciples of Christ. We are searching for a man that will teach God's word in a complete and orderly way, provide heart application and instruction on godly living in this fallen world.

### **Personal Life**

The Pastor will be married in an authentic, loving relationship with his wife and wisdom to love and discipline his children. He demonstrates godly living, at home, in the community and with the church. He is willing to lead, but is still humble, prudent and gentle. He is able to balance church, family and friends in proper alignment.

### **Community Life**

The Pastor seeks to have an influence in the community and develops relationships with neighbors through assisting them with their physical and spiritual need. He is patient and long suffering for the cause of Christ, yet willing to share truth when there is opportunity.

### **Church Life**

The senior pastor creates a vision with the session, to develop spiritual maturity in the congregation. Discipleship is accomplished through a challenging and dynamic pulpit ministry and in smaller settings to develop spiritual leaders. He is discerning of cultural versus spiritual issues. He is both coach and player, providing examples of leadership, but desires to incorporate all members to be a functioning body. He can encourage and challenge the flock to love and to do good deeds. He is willing to be transparent and accountable to the session.



## *Applying*

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If you wish to apply, contact our Pastoral Search Committee (PSC) Chairmen Michael Mattes and Bruce Beitman at [mdmattes@gracecentral.org](mailto:mdmattes@gracecentral.org), and [bruce.a.beitman@gmail.com](mailto:bruce.a.beitman@gmail.com).

To submit interest in our senior pastoral search, visit: [www.gracecentral.org/pastor](http://www.gracecentral.org/pastor)



## *Pastoral Search Committee*

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**Michael Mattes** — started attending Grace Central on the first public worship service. He has served as a Home Group leader, ministry team lead for Missions & Outreach, and chaired the Deacon board, and is currently part-time staff at GC as Director of Operations as well as a Ruling Elder. He is thankful for Grace Central's commitment to preaching the Gospel through our liturgy every Sunday. He and his wife Beth have three kids (12, 10 & 8).



**Bruce Beitman** — moved to Columbus in 1995 and helped plant Walnut Creek PCA. He and his wife Cynthia joined Grace Central about 7 years ago with their eldest son and his family. Bruce is a deacon, and has been involved in home groups, and missions. Bruce and Cynthia have been involved with the PCA for over 35 years and really appreciate the emphasis on reformed Biblical teaching. They have three married children (34, 32, 27) and 5 grandchildren.



**Jennifer Derkin** — started attending Grace Central about 13 years ago with her husband Benjamin. They have led and hosted a home group consistently for 10 years, as well as served in children's ministry, nursery, women's bible study and photography. Jennifer currently serves as the Women's Ministry leader. She is grateful for the way the church leans on the scriptures, proclaims the Gospel through Sunday gatherings and centers worship on who God is through music and worship. They are parents to three young children (7, 5, & 3) and live in Bexley.





**Jackie Clark** — is a Columbus native and has been a member at GC for 11 years. She is involved with women's bible study, missions, and home groups. She currently is the Greeting ministry team lead. She appreciates GC's strong foundational teaching of the Gospel and for the deep relationships that have been built. Jackie and her fiancé Zach are getting married in the fall, and he is a father to two daughters (23 & 20). They live in Upper Arlington.



**Brian Doran** — attended Ohio State and settled in Columbus after a year of overseas missions with his wife, Tricia. They have attended GC for 10 years and have been a part of home groups and the Thanksgiving meals, as well as VBS. Brian and Tricia are parents to 4 teenagers (2 girls, 2 boys, ages 19 – 13) and are thankful for GC's commitment to Biblical theology and preaching that draws application and comfort to real life challenges in this time and culture.



**Elizabeth Garrett** — has lived in Columbus for over 20 years with her husband Jacob. They have been at Grace Central for 12 years, and she has served on hospitality and missions teams, as well as Children's Church, Youth Ministry and VBS programs. She is grateful for Grace Central's gospel-centered teaching and its beautiful community. Elizabeth and Jacob have three daughters – 15, 12 & 9 – and live in Bexley.



**Rae Whitlock** — is from Birmingham, Alabama and moved to Columbus in 2005. He started attending GC soon after and has served on the Worship and liturgy teams, led home groups, and was a ruling elder for 5 years. He is thankful for GC's commitment to the ministry of Word and Sacrament, service to the neighborhood and city in which we've been placed and the overall emotional and spiritual health of our church over its existence. Rae and his wife Amy have a 19-year-old daughter who is enjoying some newfound independence as a college student.







*Thank You*

