

JULY 2020

GRACE MONTHLY

"Oh sing to the Lord a new song, sing to the Lord, all the Earth!"

Psalm 96:1



A New Song to Sing

by Amy Nam

The current, ongoing situations due to the impact of COVID-19 in our communities have left us all stranded in time - time that many of us still find excessively awkward and unfamiliar, compared to the busy lives that we are used to surrounding ourselves in. Personally, it came to me like an unexpected opportunity that I really needed to grasp; a time to take a break from the noise, and rest. When I was given this time to stop trying to be productive and engage in the chaotic lifestyle but to just rest in silence for these past few months, I was able to create so much more memories and discover areas in my life to reflect on that normally would have just been forgotten on a normal, busy day. By any means, my days were nothing special, unique, or much less different than most. The most exciting part for me in these past few months was actually just going out once every few weeks to restock my family's fridge. Other than that, it was just slow hours of passing time with my family. **But who would have known that God**, almighty and wondrous as He is, **would use each of these moments to show me something new about Him each day?** Have you recognized it too? Because when I was finally able to see, it made me stare in awe of Him once again!

My hope is just as Psalm 96:1 proclaims, we will not be discouraged by the dull, worldly indifferences that are expected to come, but to confidently **praise God with a new song**. I hope that we will approach each upcoming day with an open heart to receive God's calling wherever we are, whatever we may be doing - even in our very mundane moments - because I believe God will work to shine His light in these unexpected aspects of our lives.

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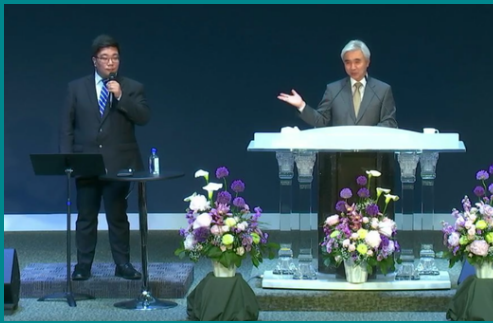
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JUNE HIGHLIGHTS

CELEBRATING GCC'S 17TH ANNIVERSARY

On Sunday, June 7th GCC celebrated their 17th anniversary. Praise God! A highlight was the special virtual choir performances, where individual members recorded themselves singing, which were then put together to create a single performance. And for the first time since the pandemic, about 20 church members were invited to attend the Sunday service while social distancing and wearing masks and gloves. We look forward to the day we can all gather in the sanctuary again to worship together!



FAMILY WORSHIP NIGHT

On Friday, June 12th, Pastor Kevin led the E-ministry-focused Family Worship Night. His sermon, titled "Unveiled," was based on 2 Corinthians 3:12-18. He shared that when we turn to things in the world for satisfaction, a veil is placed on our hearts which makes it hard for us to see God. The good news is, if we turn to the Lord, this veil can be removed. As the social distancing continues, it may become difficult for us to keep our eyes fixed on God, but we must stay grounded in our faith. Pastor Kevin also led us into a time of prayer for the upcoming summer events, that they may be overflowing with God's presence, even though they may be online.

ONLINE CHAPEL: "THE GLORY OF GOD"

Grace Youth and ABLE launched their first joint online chapel on Wednesday, June 17th! The time of worship consisted of singing songs of praise and receiving a short message from Pastor Kevin. He spoke about "The Glory of God" from 1 Kings 19:9-13. He shared that we tend to be like Elijah, knowing of God's presence but hiding away in our caves when life goes wrong. Despite our hiding, God asks us, "Why are you hiding from me in that cave?" The sermon carried an essential reminder that God is always with us. Pastor Kevin also provided two prayer topics; to ask God to teach us how to be still, and to have faith that He is listening to our prayers



Praise & Prayer

- **Praise** God for blessing us with extraordinary fathers! Last month, we celebrated Father's Day for the commitment they've made towards their families. Let us continue to appreciate our fathers for all of the big and little things that they do for us each day!
- **Praise** God for blessing us with technology to create and partake in online chapels! On June 17th, Grace Youth and ABLE held their first online chapel. Although it was not a face-to-face worship and prayer night, it was a blessed time as God was exalted through the time of praise while also providing the opportunity for students to engage with their faith in new ways.
- Every summer, numerous children, some even outside of our church community, look forward to the VBS and retreats that our church holds annually. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's summer events will happen virtually. Please **pray** that the Children's Ministry VBS and His Transformers Virtual Camp will run smoothly and that the Holy Spirit will work through the pastors, leaders, and volunteers so that even through the virtual platforms, the children will encounter Christ and grow in their faith.
- Please remember and **pray** for the GCC missionaries. While some were able to come back home, others are still at work on the field. Keep them in your hearts as you **pray** for their families' safety and well-being. For the missionaries who have returned home, **pray** that their efforts and the seeds that they have planted will keep growing, even as they reside back in Canada.
- As we enter summer break, many of us may have a lot more free time on our hands. As it is with every vacation, some of us may go out more frequently. Please **pray** that God will protect our families so that we can have a blessed time with our loved ones while staying safe and healthy.

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR JULY

Friday, Jul 10th (GEM) Zoomlympics
Wednesday, Jul 22nd Youth & ABLE Online Chapel

Various meetups are also happening online at different times throughout the month.

Make sure to keep up with our latest updates with your small group leader or on our website, Instagram, or Facebook!

Creation, Fall, and Redemption

For the past four weeks, Pastor Park has been preaching on the Foundation Series. He has covered the topics of Creation, the Fall and Redemption so far. On Creation, despite the conflict with science among many Christians, Pastor Park talks about how the study of science and every scholarly endeavour is a study of God's created universe. Even Stephen Hawking once said, "It would be difficult to explain why the universe would have begun in just this way except as the act of God who intended to create beings like us." Learning more about God's creation leads us to worship Him, who is the Creator.

Expanding more on Creation, we also delve into what it means to be created in God's image. When we were created in His image, it meant that we were created to have fellowship with Him and to work as His counterparts. The more we communicate with God, the more we become like Christ, because God created us in His image and likeness.

Yet, we cannot forget that humanity has fallen.

"The substance of sin is humanity's attempt to stand at the centre of the world," Pastor Park preached. The intention behind Adam and Eve's sin was to become god of their own lives. When they hid themselves, God asked "Where are you?" Just as He asked this question to Adam and Eve, God often asks us where we are in our hearts. Is it with God, or do we attempt to stand at the center of our own life? May we always remember to place God at the center of our lives.

Wonderfully for us, though our image has been broken by sin, God has been unfolding His story of salvation. As God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, He has also brought us out of captivity to sin through His Son, Jesus. And as the Israelites were blessed as a holy nation to bless those around them, so we are redeemed and blessed to build God's kingdom, becoming His blessing to those around us. When we are saved, we are given the intrinsic desire to minister to those around us, starting from our families and ultimately to the ends of the earth.

Our identity in Grace Youth is "blessed to bless". This is fitting for this sermon series. Even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are challenged to boldly reflect His light. Surely, having the Gospel perspective - for how we were created, to where we stand in this world, and where we are going- is incredibly powerful in our daily lives. Let us always remember that despite our sin, God continues to pursue us with His unfailing love so that we can be with Him for eternity. This is the foundation we were made to build our lives on, and praise God for making it possible for us in Jesus!