



## Newsletter

September 2008

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Steve Luxa  
Lead Pastor

### Message from Steve

The landscape has shifted, in case you haven't noticed, where people outside the church us are less inclined to seek out truth and God in the church. The reasons are too numerous to detail here, though I'm more than willing to sit down over a latte and talk about them with you! But the reality remains: people outside the church are not considering the church as a place where they'd go to seek out God and discover truth.

This new reality has multiple implications for us as a church, but let me point out one specific implication. With this reality in mind, when someone actually does visit the church for the first-time or the second-time, what would you call them? What would you call a first-time guest to GracePoint knowing that most people have dismissed the church as a place to seek out God and discover truth? I'd call them a miracle or a gift from God



## GracePoint Mom's Group

Mothers of all ages are invited to join the GracePoint Mom's group as we launch our first year program.

We will tackle marriage and child rearing issues using the Christ-centered Mom to Mom series Heart Talk created by Grace Chapel's Linda Anderson.

GracePoint Mom's group will meet bi-weekly on Thursdays from 9:30-11:30am starting on Sept. 25th. The location is Veasey Park in Groveland, MA.

Childcare will be provided. Registration forms will be mailed out and available at church in the following weeks. For more information, contact Jessica Mitchell at

[gracepointmoms@gmail.com](mailto:gracepointmoms@gmail.com).

## Outreach Links

Did you know you can stay up to date with many of the local and international organizations we support as a church

because they're actually coming to the church to seek out God and truth despite the ever-growing trend around them not to. God must be stirring in them to such a degree that they'd seek him out in a place many others have dismissed. God must be moving and guiding them in such a compelling way that they'd show up where others wouldn't.

So when we have a first-time guest or a second-time guest at GracePoint, they are nothing less than a gift from God, entrusted to us to help along in their journey of faith in Christ. They are precious. They are folks teeming with God's stirring in them. So we must treat them as nothing less than that. And admittedly, I haven't done the greatest job with our first-time and second-time guests thus far. I haven't followed up all that well with them out of a fear of offending them or bugging them. Or I've tried to reach out to them with minimal effort so that I wouldn't be pulled from other areas of my job.

So lately, I've been undergoing an internal revolution of sorts where God has reoriented me to count as precious these first-time and second-time guests. I have mourned over the opportunities lost with previous first-time and second-time guests and God has been reshaping my heart and intents over what to do going forward. So I have been working with the elders to devise a plan where we can strategically and intentionally help connect these first-time and second-time guests with GracePoint, and even more significantly, with God himself through Jesus Christ. And let me make this clear: these plans do not include to harass, bug, or make them my best friends for life. These plans are just simple, personalized, gracious, and intentional ways to connect with them so that they connect with GracePoint and ultimately with God himself.

And there is no possible way that any of these efforts with first-time and second-time guests will work unless all of us help out. How can we do so?

online? Check out the links below.....

**"Face of a Child" in Moldova** - Little Samaritan Mission - Remember to be praying for our team that leaves for Moldova in October. Keep up to date with what is going on in Moldova and affecting the lives of "our" kids.

<http://www.littlesamaritan.org/>

**Alyssia Holladay** - Currently serving in Rwanda - keep up with her activity on her blog. <http://alyssainrwanda.blogspot.com/>

**Place of Promise** - Be sure to check for current newsletters and prayer items. <http://www.placeofpromise.org/>

## GracePoint Blog

Come visit the GracePoint blog! A blog is a simple communication tool that can be used and accessed by anyone.

Steve, Ryan and others will post comments to the blog that anyone can read. We will highlight everything from the ministries of our church, the people of GracePoint, and local events that impact the community in which we serve.

<http://gracepointne.blogspot.com/>

Quick Links

1. **Pray.** Pray for those first-time and second-time guests you see sitting in the seats around you. Pray they'd connect with God and others so that they'd return to gain relationships and ultimately take on the responsibility of GracePoint.

2. **Show up for the service on time, even a little bit early.** I know, I know, I know, 10 AM on a weekend morning is really tough, especially with kids. But these first-time and second-time guests routinely show up on time to sit in the auditorium with just a few people there. It is like being invited to someone's house for a dinner, only to show up to their house and find it vacant. We all act as hosts to these folks and our presence reassures them that they made the right choice to sacrifice to get to GracePoint at 10 AM and to seek God with us.

3. **Fill out the connection card.** Every service, we're going to call on everyone to fill out a connection card. Not only can you provide us with feedback, keep your information current in our database, and ask for prayer in your life (we really do pray for the requests turned in), but also you provide the right cue for our first-time guests to fill out their connection card as well. That connection card is how we can connect authentically and personally with all our first-time and second-time guests (remember, there's no harassing involved!). That connection card is the easiest, clearest, and fastest gateway for our first-time and second-time guests to have the opportunity to find their way into GracePoint, community with others, and eventually responsibility for our church as they come to Christ for the first time or deepen their walk with him at GracePoint. Without that connection card, that first-time or second-time guest will struggle to find their way into GracePoint as confusion ensues and only the determined will get there! For all of us to fill out the connection card

[Register Now](#)  
[More About Us](#)

provides safety for the first-time and second-time guest to fill it out so that they can ultimately deepen their faith in Christ.

It's just that easy. Pray. Show up on time. Fill out the connection card. If we do that and continue to be the warm community we always have been since our inception, I am convinced God will honor our efforts and send more first-time and second-time guests our way because we've demonstrated we value them as he does. I am equally convinced that we'll be shocked at how many will come to Christ or return to him in their process of getting connected to GracePoint. In fact, I've already had moments of shock this summer as I've seen God work in this process.

Hosting gifts from God on Sunday morning with you,



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## Missions and Outreach

### *Place of Promise in Lowell, MA*

GracePoint is partnering with Place of Promise to support their Christ centered ministry of helping people recover from brokenness and get their lives turned around. GracePoint participates by providing monetary support as well as facilitating donations of needed material goods for the residents of the program. The church also arranges and promotes opportunities for members of the congregation to get personally involved with the residents through planned activities such as shared meals, Bible studies and mentoring programs. Participation with this ministry can be at any level of involvement; from a one time activity to a long term one on one mentoring relationship. For more

information contact Craig Utley.

On Sunday September 14, Beth Kidd from Place of Promise, is going to be highlighted in our service. Come learn more about this dynamic ministry and ways you can serve.

For additional information on Place of Promise or some of the other ministries that GracePoint is supporting, please see the "Outreach Links" section in the newsletter.

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## Financial Update

The elders would like to thank everyone who responded so quickly to our financial news in the last e-newsletter. In short, your giving was jaw-dropping as the monthly giving approached some of our highest for the year! While we still have a ways to go, we wanted to pause and say thank you for your generosity to GracePoint and for the advancement of God's kingdom through us!

**Below is an update on our financial status through August 2008.**

*(Our fiscal year runs from May 1, 2008 - April 30, 2009.)*

**Total Revised Budget: \$336,227**

**YTD Budget (4 mos.): \$112,076**

**YTD Giving (4 Mos.): \$81,446**

**YTD Difference: -\$30,630**

**Cash Reserve as of the end of August (not designated)= \$115,000**

**Average August**

**Attendance: 83** (includes KidsTown)

GracePoint Community Church

(978) 681-6483

[GracePointNE.org](http://GracePointNE.org)