

Grace Steps Up to join the 'National Church Vision'
An Undivided Heart, Prayer and Fasting, Community Engagement

Introduction: **'Grace'** Church's Unchanging Vision:
To Know God and to Make Him Known

That vision never changes. Sometimes our levels of surrender need to
Step Up.

Pastor Di, speaking to our leaders at *Get a Grip on Leadership* meeting
asked:

'Do you know what I mean when I speak of a 'Holy Discontent?'

I'm not happy with the way I am.

I want to put your minds at ease. We are not calling on you to work harder!

We already see your commitment to your church...where the 20% serves
the 80%.

We want to put it to you as our Leadership Team to examine **your** holy
discontent so together we can take **Grace** to the next level...to step up in a
number of different ways through 2010.

We are the ones others look to.

We are aware that, as you measure our spiritual walk, by what you see you,
you set your own level...so it is challenging for us.

So we (your Pastors) invite you to join us as we STEP UP!'

Pastors Chris and Glenys also shared this work of the Holy Spirit in their
lives with the Congregation on 25th October.

In our own lives we measure our own journeys by our spiritual disciplines,
our connection to the family of faith, and our community engagement.

Let's STEP UP our Spiritual Disciplines

A daily practice of feeding our souls reading the Bible

A daily 'prayer' walks...pray as you go

*Prayer and Fasting...a regular habit or random reasons to go without food
and focus on prayer*

Simplicity...removing clutter from our lives to give God priority

Tithing our income in obedience to God

Goals and Strategies for Grace to *STEP UP*

1. *The 60-60 challenge.*

Set your watch or phone to beep every waking hour for 60 days. This will remind you to measure your conscious awareness of the presence of God in your life and to question how you are including Him in your thoughts, planning and actions.

(credit to John Burke..*Creating a Come as You Are Culture*)

2. *Prayer and Fasting....Why?*

There are Biblical accounts of leaders calling for prayer and fasting in times when they needed to hear from God.

In choosing this course we commit ourselves in a new way to call down the power of God upon our Church Community and the wider Community.

The idea of missing a couple of meals (fluids are fine) so that we can concentrate on prayer is another one of God's ideas. When we decide to give it a go we experience His power in our lives like we never have before.

3. *Fireproofing Marriages*

Broken homes are a tragedy anywhere but particularly in the Church. We will introduce an opportunity for couples to say...

'Yes. We are committed to our spouse for the long haul and we will do what it takes to strengthen our relationships'

'*Fireproof*' is a proven journey. It includes a 'love dare'.

4. *'Hi 5's' - Sharing lives.*

We are going to encourage everyone who comes to *Grace* to be sure to be part of a small group of at least 5 who 'do life together'. This will be about building relationships of trust and accountability so that we can all be strengthened in our Christian walk. Some will already be in an 'organic' group like this. We will encourage you to be intentional about STEPPING UP to a higher level.

5. STEP UP to *Train an apprentice*.

We will deliberately engage our Youth, and anyone else who is not engaged in a service activity, to learn a new skill or to take some small responsibility. Our responsibility as Pastors is 'to equip the saints for ministry'-this is the way we will ensure our church's future leadership and the way we will send people out into their world with spiritual confidence.

6. We will STEP UP to *Membership*

It is proven across churches and community organizations that those who make a decision to 'make this my place/church' and become covenant members, are those who serve best and who grow stronger. So we will be encouraging you to believe that *Membership Matters*, starting with our leaders. It will start with 3 small group sessions on what it's all about before those who STEP UP are approved by the Board and officially brought into membership before the church. A great time for rejoicing.

7. New Christians will be asked to **STEP UP**.

Our *New Creation* studies will be offered in a variety of settings to lay a strong foundation of doctrine. We will encourage newcomers who have visited Grace over several weeks to consider *Christianity Explained*...no strings attached.

We can also offer a new online course for those who want to go deeper in their own time

8. We will STEP UP to *Fellowship*

We don't yet know each other. This must change.

We will give appropriate people the task to plan events that bring us together for a good time...laughter....to engage newcomers...and something special for those for whom life is really hard.

GRACE WINTER WEEKEND in 2010 will be organized by one of our small groups. You will be offered the opportunity to regularly set aside savings for this weekend over the first half of the year.

9. STEP UP to *Community Engagement*

This will mean taking an audit of how our people already do this and looking at other opportunities to do something together, as we consider our gifts and time. We want to hear from **you** to know how you are investing your time and talent to serve our Community.

Currently we have Mentors in a Primary School for the *Kids Hope* Program.

Our Tech Team gives its time for significant Community Events.

Our Worship Team members are also active in Community Events.

We have opened our building for the use of approved community groups.

Our doors are open to all to make friends and learn new skills on Mondays at 'Foyer Friends'.

We will plan to include community focus themes as our themes for our weekly celebration and preaching, e.g. National Volunteers Day.

Tell us where you see an opportunity for our church to serve our Community.

10. STEP UP to *MISSIONS*.....

Already we have our own missionaries. Our Annual Missions focus will be held this year on 1st November as a 'Missions Expo'...featuring displays and info from those connected to *Grace*.

Rev Kay Fulcher (Solomon Islands Coordinator of Training) will be our Guest Preacher that day.

So we will step out of ourselves and *step up to missions* in response to the call of God to the church to meet the needs of the 'other'.

This will stretch our faith as we are asked to give a day's wage as a self-denial offering.

We All Need a Break!

In all of this School Holidays and Public Holidays will be ‘Sabbaths’. This means that our Teams will have a ‘skeleton staff’, we may ask you to bring food for a Fellowship Tea, Sundays will be surprisingly different, and you may be asked to step up at short notice to clean up.

Christmas and ***Easter*** will be ‘go all out’ times to engage with a community more open to the church in those seasons than any other times. So give us your ideas to make these times special and put up your hand to help.

Pastors Chris and Glenys Foley and Di Allan