

## Meet Our Church Family In Bristol



• We have been blessed and nurtured by our Church family in Oregon for almost a decade. God has been faithful to provide us a Church family in Bristol which has continued to encourage, exhort and instruct us while we are in Bristol. We hope to share with you information about this wonderful blessing which God has given us.

*Sadie (left) worshipping along with members and guests at Grace Church Bristol. Also visible is our Senior Pastor Nathan (right of Sadie) and his wife Clare (right of Nathan).*

Grace Church Bristol started out as a church plant from a larger church in Wales (Christchurch) about seven years ago. Bristol is a community desperate for bible-believing, gospel-centered churches. There are a lot of churches in the area, but they typically teach either a prosperity-gospel, word-faith message or have dead, nonexistent worship and exist merely as social organizations with no theology or biblical teaching. Grace Church was started to provide a church that worshipped God with passion, but adhered to the bible as truth and the gospel as the church's mission.

When we visited Bristol back in March of 2008, we were absolutely blown away by this dual emphasis of Grace Church. They welcomed us into their midst, their homes and their lives with genuine hospitality.

### **Familiarity**

In so many ways Grace Church is exactly like our former Church in Oregon. Doctrinally, Grace Church upholds the exact same core beliefs - the trinity, the word as infallible truth, the

need to evangelise, the ministry of the Holy Spirit through giftings, the need for fellowship and so on.

In fact, the service is almost identical. About 70 of us meet at 10:30 in a local community centre. We worship God for about 40 minutes. We share any announcements. There is a time to give. We then are instructed in the Word expositively. We close in prayer and then sing a final song together. Fellowship afterwards goes on for about an hour and many of us spend the entire Sunday in small groups discussing the message and sharing meals.

At Calvary Chapel, we met every Wednesday night for a mid-week service. At Grace Church, we also meet mid-week, but typically in the .....  
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### **Elliotts Abroad Newsletter**

Produced, written, edited and distributed by Colin and Sadie Elliott at their own expense.

Please continue to pray for us, but do not send any money!

Thanks for reading!



CARDS - VARIOUS

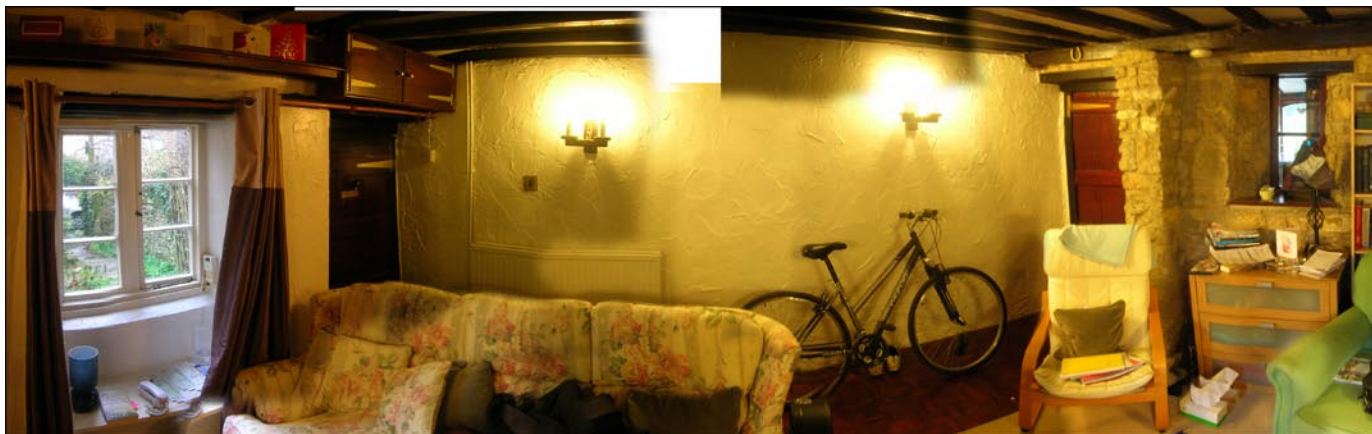
We've got all kinds of cards from people - from holidays to just kind words and thoughts of encouragement.

BICYCLE - ARTUR & CAITLIN

Caitlin is an American and Artur is from Germany. Artur fixed this bike and then gave it to us as a surprise!

DRESSER - MATT & LIZZIE

These guys found us a dresser when we moved into the cottage and had nowhere to store things.



BOOKS - VARIOUS

Our pastors and friends have provided numerous Christian books to help with our growth.

COUCH - PETER & JUNE

Peter is a pastor at Grace Church. After hosting us for six weeks, Peter gave us this couch when we moved out!

CHAIR - NATHAN & MARGE

When we needed furniture, Nathan and Marge gave us this IKEA chair plus another one we keep upstairs.

homes of elders and leaders in groups of eight to fourteen. We have socialise, go through a teaching (typically, but not always based on whatever we heard on Sunday). We then discuss it with one another, looking for opportunity to encourage or help one another in applying the message to our lives. We end with a time of prayer.

Outreach and the Gospel

Aside from these planned church activities, much of the rest of our activities as members are self-organised and geared towards outreach. On a Monday night, many of us get together at a local park and play football (soccer) - inviting non-believers and community members to come along. On Sunday after-

Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. [Romans 12:10-13]



Colin and his mother, Martie, hanging out at home group. Currently our group is thirteen people ages 20 through 32. We meet together to share in the intimacy of Christian fellowship - to challenge and encourage one another.



**BOOKCASE - NATHAN & MARGE**

Two chairs and two bookcases were given to us by Nathan and Marge. They have been so kind to us!

**THE REST - BRISTOLIANS**

The rest of what you see here - mirrors, pictures, odds and ends - were given to us through Freecycle, a local website.

**DVD PLAYER - GUS**

Gus was kind enough to give us this DVD player. It's fairly new and will even play some of our DVDs from the US.



**COMFY CHAIR - ANDY & NIKKI**

These guys let us know that they didn't need this chair anymore and kindly offered it to us.

**TV - NICK & RACHEL**

Nick and Rachel got a new TV recently and were kind enough to pass their old one along to us!

*[Spread] This is an image of our living room that shows the extent to which God has blessed us through the kindness of others. Our house is a constant reminder of God's provision. People did not merely say they would pray for us and leave it at that. Instead, they acted and met our needs in abundance.*

noons, members of the church organise a local Kids Club for children, playing games, singing songs and sharing the gospel.

Every Sunday night, younger people get together for social activities, bringing non-believers where every other Sunday, they will hear a gospel message and learn to apply the word in practical ways.

But more important than these activities, Grace Church emphasises that believers share the gospel with their family, at their workplace or school and otherwise in their individual lives. There is a realisation that people are not saved through programs and activities, but by the power of the gospel. The church looks to equip members to share the gospel in the context where God has placed them, and to diligently seek opportunities to present the gospel to their friends, neighbors and colleagues.

**Emphases**

Aside from sharing the gospel, Grace Church has a couple of other areas where they place strong emphasis.

**God's Sovereignty** - Grace Church is "essentially reformed." Theologically, this basically boils down to a belief that God is completely in control of all things and is perfectly good, while man is completely and totally evil. God sovereignly acts to give us the faith we need to believe in Him and to accept his accomplished work on the cross in Christ. Because man is incapable of any good works on his own, God has mercifully intervened by his Grace to save us from our sin.

**Biblical Manhood and Womanhood** - Grace Church believes in equipping men to be men and women to be women. God has created us equal, but also different in order to complement one another. These differences reflect God's order and his sovereignty in creating us. From the CBMW website:

In the home, men lovingly are to lead their wives and family as women intelligently are to submit to the leadership of their husbands. In the church, while men and women share equally in the blessings of salvation, some governing and teaching roles are restricted to men.

In understanding the truth of God's design for men and women, we have been able to enjoy the growth that comes from embracing biblical masculinity and femininity. Grace Church actively disciplines men and women in the roles and responsibilities which God has beautifully designed.

**Theology** - Grace Church teaches that the power to apply truth comes from first knowing what truth is. If we don't understand what it is that we believe, we cannot live and represent it to each other and the world. The application of the Word is not something we do from the ground up - as if we are able to muster enough strength and morality in ourselves to change. Rather we are taught that by studying God himself and his attributes, our actions will follow in response to this. We are taught that we can't do good by merely obeying guidelines and biblical





*Friends of ours (from left) Jen, Tim and Jen along with Colin's mom and Sadie enjoying good weather and Mexican food out in the back garden.*

principles - but that we must understand the God of the bible and allow the Holy Spirit to minister to us in our lives.

**Hospitality** - Within weeks of moving to Bristol, we were overwhelmed with the generosity of Grace Church. We came over with nothing and yet people took furniture and items out of their own homes to give to us. But there was nothing special about us, that we received such wonderful treatment when we arrived as strangers. We have seen new people come to the church and receive the exact same welcome. We ourselves, have been encouraged to share our lives with strangers as well. Grace Church emphasises opening up our houses and our time so that others can be made to feel welcome. Hospitality is continually modeled to us by members of the church.

**Worship** - Every song we sing in worship is "gospel-centred." That is, it declares the truth of the gospel. We would not be singing songs in Grace church that are emotion or men-centred. However, our worship is intense and passionate because we are responding to the words of scripture and the attributes and nature of God himself.

The worship ministry is taken very seriously. When Colin began leading worship at Grace Church, our pastor took the time to meet with him, go over the fundamentals of worship, provide helpful materials and resources for growth in ministry and continuing encouragement and advice on an almost weekly basis. The worship leaders regularly give advice and ideas to help one another grow.

**Application of the Gospel** - We were so blessed when we began to evangelise with Way of the Master in Oregon. Going through the course reminded us that God has saved us from our sins and caused us to worship him more and seek to live lives more in accord with biblical truth. This is because the gospel is essential for daily living. At Grace Church, we remind each other of the gospel every day. It is the source of our love for one another and our greatest hope.

**Fellowship** - Understanding the gospel, and being unified by it, has created a church where there is considerably less strife and personality conflicts. When believers realise that we are unable to do good, we are more prepared to yield to God's Spirit. We can forgive one another because Christ has forgiven us. We can help one another because Christ has saved us. We can admonish and encourage one another because in the context of the gospel, we realise our humble and lowly position - sinners saved by grace. Humility and the death of pride are fundamental points of emphasis at Grace Church. But more importantly, these are being applied because their source is understood - God himself.

Grace church understands that fellowship isn't just small talk, friendship or spending time together. Fellowship involves serving one another, praying for one another, worshipping together, providing correction, encouraging one another and so many other things. Because of this, members quickly cultivate a Godly love for one another. It is not merely

a matter of being friends or hanging out together, but pursuing God's active hand in our lives through the fellowship of the Church. We rely on one another to experience the power of God's leading in our lives.

### Final Thoughts

God has really blessed us in Bristol. When we began pursuing this move, we genuinely thought that the area would be so spiritually bankrupt as to require us to start our own bible study. How pleasantly surprised we have been to find God moving powerfully in our new community! But more than that, we have been humbled and awed by just how much this experience has taught us to depend on God alone and trust his wisdom.



*Sadie out on a walk near downtown Bristol with Nathan and Marge, who are not only our friends, but are committed to praying for us, encouraging us, reminding us of the gospel and challenging us when we sin.*

# A Few Photos From This March



*While we could write pages upon pages about how difficult it is to navigate the streets of this country - this picture might give an idea. Same street: two names. The street which borders Colin's university changes names six times in less than one mile.*



*We love taking walks (right) in the country behind our house. Also (left) a recent visit to Silchester near London.*



Thanks for staying  
in touch with us!

## Back In Oregon: April 7-17

We're taking a trip back to Oregon in April from the 7th to the 17th. Because we'll have a car and be staying in Springfield, it will be very easy for us to spend some time with lots of people.

We are really excited to see everyone but our time will be very limited so we will need to plan visits a little more precisely than we'd like. This means now is the time to email or call us with your availability. We've also been slowly getting a hold of people to work things out. But please, don't wait - call us or email us so we can have everything arranged.

If you have a flexible work schedule, a longer lunch break or don't work during the days - please consider seeing us then,

and leave the evenings and weekend for people who work during the day. Please don't wait until we arrive! We won't have much time to arrange any last-minute get togethers.

We are unsure when we will next be able to afford a trip - it could be some time. So please take the opportunity to catch up with us now. It is also very likely that we will have guests with us on our next trip over and will be spending some time showing them around our beautiful state.

It may be possible that we hold a larger get-together somewhere. We are going to toss around that possibility during the next week or so. If this materialises, we will send out emails and post it to our website so that you can make it.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone and making the most of this opportunity to visit. We hope to see you soon!

## How to Contact Colin and Sadie in the UK

There are many ways for our friends and family in the US to keep in touch with us:

### On the Web:

facebook - just search for Colin and Sadie  
Colin's myspace - [myspace.com/jczeroman](http://myspace.com/jczeroman)  
Sadie's myspace - [myspace.com/mrselliott](http://myspace.com/mrselliott)

Sadie's blog - [unfoldinggrace.blogspot.com](http://unfoldinggrace.blogspot.com)

Elliotts Abroad website - [elliottsabroad.com](http://elliottsabroad.com)  
Colin's music website - [cpelliott.com](http://cpelliott.com)  
Colin's editorial website - [zealfortruth.org](http://zealfortruth.org)

### Email:

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