

GCF in the Naperville Sun - May 12, 2006

GRACE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Religious affiliation: Independent, nondenominational Christian church. Our goal is to present biblical research to help people get to know God better without the requirements of organized religion.

Neighborhood: We meet in homes throughout the Naperville area, but our Ministry Resource Center is at 1701 Quincy Ave., Suite 17. Our Web address is www.gcfnaperville.org.

Size and character of congregation: We are unique in that we don't have a formal membership. If you are blessed to come and you learn things that help you grow with God, keep coming. Our Sundays attract between 50 and 100 adults and children with slightly more than that attending home fellowships.

• Pastors: The Rev. Bob Carden is the senior pastor, but the real pastors of Grace Christian Fellowship are the men and women who lead our home fellowships.

• Scheduled services: We gather at 10:30 a.m. on the second and fourth Sundays of the month at our Ministry Resource Center. On the first and third Sundays, as well as during the week, we meet in smaller home fellowships.

• Largest service and turnout: The largest service of the year is always Easter Sunday. The largest home fellowships usually occur at those times that people share Communion together.

• Biggest wish-list item: To reach all people in our community who desire to operate the power of God in their lives and to get to know God better.

• Biggest issue: Helping people get beyond the religious traditions that have stifled their spiritual growth and to come to know the heart of God's message about his son.

• Most memorable wedding or other service: All weddings are wonderful, but perhaps the most joyous are the increasing

number of weddings where one of the participants started off in our Children's Fellowship and are now going forth to start lives and families on their own.

• Proudest moment: I wouldn't use the word "proud," but the moments that give us the greatest joy are probably at the closing session of our introductory class, Discovering God's Word. At that time we help students manifest the power of God in their lives by speaking in tongues. To see a man or woman realize God's presence in their lives is still a thrill, even after 35 years.

• Most dedicated volunteer: This is a tie between all of our home fellowship leaders. They are the ones who are always available to teach, pray for and otherwise care for God's people on a local basis.

• Other services and programs offered: We have a prayer night once a month and study nights twice a month and the Discovering God's Word program, a seven-session class offered several times a year.

• Most prized possession: The Word of God, which we don't so much possess as steward. The Bible brings us into direct contact with the heart and will of God and is certainly mankind's most precious possession.

Submitted by the Rev. Bob Carden.