

Take a look with me and **SEE** what this vision might look like ... in your life, in your family, in our church, in our community, and in the lives of others:

I SEE ...

I see.... Grace Community Church as a vibrant congregation of hundreds of committed Christ followers, meeting weekly in Cell groups throughout our harvest region; loving God and helping people.

I see.... men and women being established in their faith, equipped to minister, and faithfully serving using their spiritual S.H.A.P.E. in an area of personal passion.

I see.... Christ-followers living God-honoring lives where Integrity, Authenticity, Humility, Sincerity, and Ministry are identifiable trademarks of each believer's character and conduct.

I see.... people in our community growing in their God-given potential as human beings, discovering their talents, sharpening their gifts, strengthening their lives, benefiting their families and communities, and discovering God's love for them and a new life in Christ by their interaction and observation with the people of Grace.

I see.... believers transforming their world by a creative and intentional strategy of actively serving the needs of others and aggressively sharing the gospel with those to whom they have contact during the week and through regular outreach events.

I see.... Christian workers from ministries in our region coming to Grace, eager to learn how to do contemporary creative ministry from an active successful model.

I see.... this congregation demonstrating the heart qualities and ministry priorities of Christ and coming together willingly and regularly for celebrative worship, instructive teaching, and supportive encouragement.

I see.... people streaming into the auditorium. Chatting mingling, hugging, smiling, moving ever closer to each other and to their seats. They've come just a few minutes early, because they couldn't lie in bed any longer... today is a precious day. It is the day set aside for God. The day unlike any other in the week; they've gathered together as the body and bride of Christ.

I see.... a web of people involved in every aspect of what is to take place this morning. Techies, greeters, hospitality team members, children's workers, prayer warriors, worship and band members, and many others – encouraged, excited, and energized - everyone giving, giving, and giving of themselves.

It has taken weeks if not months of planning, dreaming, praying, searching, and seeking God's direction. Each and every person has come in pursuit of the Almighty. They want to enter into the very presence of God. They want to worship. They want to praise and honor the God whom they are in awe of, in love with. And so they set aside their agendas, their "lists", their fears, their burdens, and themselves – all so they can be one, and as one – encounter, experience, and enjoy the Holy One.

I see.... lights dimming, eyes widening, and the crowd settling. I hear the buzz of the room hush. I feel the tingle of anticipation of our honored guest's arrival. It is the Lord whom we invite, seek and desire. And His Spirit meets ours!

I see.... faces turned up to the heavens while others are bowed down low. Their expressions reveal that some are searching, fearful, distant, lonely, in need of healing, forgiveness, and reconciliation, and more than a few are tired - looking for rest. Other's have the look of love, joy, and satisfaction, but underneath all are hungry for what only He can bring – spiritual nourishment and refreshment.

I see.... those who have come in search of meaning, for healing, to learn, to belong, and for spiritual awakening. But the majority of people have simply come to celebrate, because there is no place in the world they would rather

be. Seemingly standing on their tip-toes, they want a glimpse of heaven from their earthly perch; they long to be under the shadow of His wings.

I see..... the worship team as they engage His flock. Music fills the air and voices break forth in praise. Passionately, authentically, and simply - every note a new song of adoration. With every breath they recognize the privilege they have to worship their sweet Jesus, their beloved Savior, and to lead others into His presence.

I see..... some in the congregation close their eyes, and envision themselves lifted up into the heavenly choir, where they join the angels in singing "Holy, Holy, Holy is the lamb". They are lost in His presence; many with arms raised, others clapping, and a few swaying. But all have the Lord's glory splashed upon their faces; smiling as if looking into the countenance of their lover, their best friend.

I see..... others watching those on the platform as they lead and I see a tear form in their eye, because as they look into the face of that singer or that instrumentalist, they see Jesus through them.

I see..... the people's lives and spirits moved; to KNOW God personally and to respond to Him in worship, service, giving, and ministry. The Holy Spirit is at work drawing, deepening, and transforming lives – it's as if the act of creation was taking place all over again.

I see..... people willingly, sacrificially, and cheerfully giving their tithes and offerings in loving appreciation for what God has provided for their lives.

I see..... God's Word taught with conviction and sincerity and people's faces as they consider the implication of Truth for their lives.

I see..... a change come over them ... There is such a sweetness in the air, as we come to a close. A hush. A lingering awe. As if to say, this was so good, so yum. We dwell for just one more moment of stillness. Allowing the Spirit to imprint our heart.

I see..... people leave with a renewed love for and commitment to represent God as they walk along their life path. They are so full, they want to share. They don't want to keep this precious gift to themselves. They plot and plan and scheme about who they will talk to, who they will write to, who they will help. They intentionally work together, supporting and encouraging one another to share God's story of love with those who have spiritual needs. They are driven by God's love to squeeze one more person into their luggage if need be, for their road trip to heaven. The REAL thing, the party they've been practicing, praying, and waiting for.

Next week there will be a few new faces. They'll look around and wonder what's up with these people? And wonder how to get in on this, because it looks and sounds, and feels Heavenly, and they don't want to be left out.

I see..... the people of Grace **getting into the GAME!**

This is just a small portion of what *I see* as I consider what God wants to do in and through Grace Church.