



PROJECTS FINANCED BY GRACE FINANCIAL

A thriving community of faith in Lithopolis

Grace Fellowship Church began the journey towards a south campus launch in 2017 as part of the campaign which raised funds for the Jefferson Campus.

Before Lithopolis launched, many families drove 30 minutes or more to attend other campuses, which made inviting neighbors difficult. Having originally considered the town of Lancaster, God had other plans, ultimately leading the church to Lithopolis, a small rural community southeast of Columbus. In April 2023, after years of preparation and prayer, Grace Fellowship signed a lease and began renovations on a former church building in Lithopolis with the commitment of 300 Grace Fellowship attendees committed to joining the campus. Grace Financial was honored to support the church as a lending partner throughout this process.

Pastor Matt Gish joined Grace Fellowship in August 2023, leading up to the launch of the Lithopolis campus. With two decades in student ministry, Pastor Matt brought a deep passion for discipleship, laying the foundation for Lithopolis' spiritual growth. At the launch on August 27, 2023, 580 people filled the new campus. Today, the campus has weekly attendance of 430 people while more than 500 people call it home.

The heart of Grace Fellowship's ministry in Lithopolis is not just about gathering people—it's about seeing lives transformed.

The Lithopolis campus has become a vibrant extension of Grace Fellowship, whose mission is to help people live Jesus-centered lives. By the end of 2024, Lithopolis had celebrated 31 baptisms, with 18 more individuals baptized in early 2025.

A highlight of the Lithopolis Campus has been visible in the student ministry, which has grown from 30 students in the first year to 70 students actively participating this year. The leadership team, including a newly added Student Ministry Coordinator, has been instrumental in fostering growth.

From the beginning, Grace Fellowship's vision for Lithopolis has been rooted in serving the local community. Over the summer, the church partnered with a local food pantry to provide shoes, socks, and water bottles to over 100 kids. They also support two nearby schools by stocking teacher resource rooms with essential supplies. These initiatives reflect a desire to be more than a place of worship—they aim to be a source of hope and encouragement for the community.

The culture of invitation has also been a key characteristic of this campus. Children and students have led the way, eagerly inviting friends to church, starting Bible studies, and helping new attendees feel welcome. Many who were once hesitant about church have found belonging and purpose here. A young man in Lithopolis felt compelled to step inside the church as he drove by one day. A

year later, his girlfriend and parents now attend church with him and serve in ministry at Grace Fellowship.

While the Lithopolis Campus began as a leased facility, Grace Fellowship recognized the long-term potential of having a permanent home in this growing town. A year after launching, leadership made the decision to purchase the building, further cementing their commitment to Lithopolis for years to come.

As the campus continues to thrive, the people of Grace Fellowship look forward to what God has in store. Through outreach, discipleship, and a passion for serving others, they remain committed to making Jesus known in this place they call home.



To learn more about Grace Fellowship Church Lithopolis and join them in prayer for this exciting season of ministry, scan the QR code at left

RETIREMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

Thank you Brenda Byers



Brenda Byers, CFO of Grace Financial, has announced her retirement from the organization in April 2025. We deeply appreciate the investment she has made in this organization over the past 39 years, primarily serving in executive accounting and finance roles.

In her retirement, Brenda is looking forward to exploring new ways to serve Jesus, figuring out retirement with her husband Brent, finding more time with friends and loved ones, and enjoying Colorado with family and Western neighbors.

During Brenda's time with Grace Financial, she supported four directors from Walter Fretz to Ryan Bowell, and she has seen the investment balances grow nearly 1,000 percent—from \$12 million in 1986 to \$117 million in 2024. It is easy to see the impact Brenda has had on the organization from a financial perspective, but the impact she had on the culture of the organization is even more evident. Brenda has been a steady force of spiritual leadership to this organization, whether that be during team devotions, interacting with our investors who stop in, or encouraging the team on a daily basis through her heart for Jesus.

For Brenda, working at Grace Financial meant being part of a ministry that truly invested in eternal rewards. "What an incred-

ible organization God established back in the 1950s, one that has truly stood the test of time. For me, it was more than a career; it was a journey that challenged and stretched, supported by mentors who guided my growth. It was a community of colleagues and lifelong friends who shared in life's milestones and a deep commitment to ministry values. It was a place that shaped my understanding of what truly matters in life and brought immense joy in serving.

I am profoundly grateful for the years I spent at GB Financial Planning Service, GBNAM & GAIM, and GBIF/Grace Financial. I have always believed that God's hand of blessing has been upon this unique ministry. What I love most is that our mission has remained unchanged from the very beginning. Being part of a job that supports churches and ministries by encouraging individuals to invest in Kingdom work has been deeply rewarding. The result is a global network of influence through our Fellowship, all for God's glory.

Through seasons of uncertainty and trials that seemed insurmountable, as well as blessings that boggle the mind, one truth is evident—God is good and faithful. I am truly honored to have played even a tiny part in Grace Financial's history."

Brenda's extensive experience and wisdom will be deeply missed across all areas of the organization. Ryan Bowell, CEO, shared, "Brenda has been a model of consistency, excellence, service, and humility for nearly 40 years. Her attention to detail coupled with her deep care for staff and constituents provided thoughtful leadership through many decades.

Please join us in wishing Brenda all the best in her retirement. If you would like to share your thanks to Brenda along with us, you can reach her at brendabyers2@gmail.com. As we look forward to Brenda's retirement, all of us at Grace Financial want to express our gratitude for the opportunity to work alongside her and wish her the best in the years ahead.

Thanks Brenda!

\$710,233 in goodwill contributions

For 2024, Grace Financial continues its longstanding track record of contributions to numerous ministries within the Charis Fellowship. With a successful audit recently completed, and 2024 year-end results finalized, the Board has approved goodwill contributions totaling \$710,233. The majority of these contributions are given to ministries that focus on church planting and leadership development.

"Stewardship is a key value in our organization, and it is this foundation that helps make these goodwill contributions possible," says Ryan Bowell, President and CEO. "God is incredibly gracious to our ministry, and it is with great joy that we have the privilege of giving back to the Charis Fellowship through our contributions. Our prayer is that these funds will empower the people of the Charis Fellowship to continue sharing the gospel in life-changing ways."



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