

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”

Galatians 5:22-23 ESV



The Christian life is a journey.

TrailNotes speaks to forward movement, paying attention to the “landscape” we are passing through in this trail-laced, wooded hillside and valley, not to mention the world beyond. **TrailNotes** is an unfolding, ongoing journal of the people who share the trail with us and the things we’re learning and doing. This is a monthly publication of Grace Fellowship Church, Mansfield, Ohio.

ElderTalk: ‘The Apple Doesn’t Fall Far From The Tree’ JADAÉ FOX

Imagine standing in an apple orchard. You look at the ground, and what do you see? Scattered apples — most of them lying right beneath the branches that bore them. They don’t roll far; they remain close to the tree that gave them life.



“The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree” is a familiar saying (originating from Germany) which reminds us that children often resemble their parents in both appearance and character. It’s a sobering truth for parents and grandparents: the next generation is watching. How we live — our values, how we spend our money, time, and talents — all leaves a lasting impact, for good or for ill.

Proverbs 22:6 tells us, “Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not (easily) depart from it.” But we must remember that Proverbs

gives us principles, not guarantees. Even the most faithful parenting may still see children who choose not to follow the Lord. Still, this motivates me as a parent to give my kids the best example possible. Since they won’t fall far from our tree (my wife and me), we want them to see Christ in us.

But this metaphor doesn’t stop with parenting. It also points to our relationship with God. If He is truly our Father and if His Spirit dwells within us, then we ought to resemble Him. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness... these are not manufactured by our effort, but are the fruit of the Spirit that grows naturally when we remain close to Him (Galatians 5:22–23).

Ways to stay close to Jesus:

(with your children watching and learning!)

Read and delight in God’s Word — John 15:7;

Psalm 1:2–3

Pray daily — 1 Thessalonians 5:17

Obey His commands — John 15:10

Love others — John 15:12

Bear lasting fruit — John 15:8

Worship regularly — Psalm 95:6

Confess sins quickly — 1 John 1:9

Trust God in trials — Psalm 91:1; 1 Peter 5:7

Stay in fellowship with other believers —

Hebrews 10:24–25

Teach your children diligently —

Deuteronomy 6:7

So, when people look at our lives, will they say, “I can see the resemblance — that’s a child of God”? Or will they wonder if we’ve rolled far from the One who gave us life?

“The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree” — and as children of God, neither should we.

“You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.” — Deuteronomy 6:7

RADIO FREE NARNIA

The One Sentence from the C.S. Lewis Story That Could Change Your Life

RUSSELL MOORE

Passing around the corner from the dining room table, I heard one of my sons reading aloud from C. S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. I stopped and listened, knowing how much those Narnia books have meant to me. He was in the middle of a line, speaking fast and about to move on to the next paragraph. I stepped out into his view and said, "Stop there; read it again. It's the most important sentence in the book."

I don't know that I would always say it's the most important sentence in the book; I could make the case for at least a dozen options. But I would say it's the most important sentence for us right now.

Edmund had betrayed his siblings—goaded on by the White Witch and a taste for Turkish delight—and after an entire narrative leading the reader to despise the treasonous brat, Aslan, the lion and rightful ruler of Narnia, appeared and walked a sheepish and defeated Edmund back to the others.



"Here is your brother," Aslan said, "and—there is no need to talk to him about what is past."

When a struggling young Christian comes to see me, it's rarely because he or she wants to flout the holiness of a biblical ethic, as might have happened at the start of my ministry. Now, these tortured ones are actually trying to do their best in walking with Christ—confessing their sin,

September 2025

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3, 10, 17, 24 CONNECT groups for all ages (every Wednesday).

6 GFC fall workday.

7 Pastor Eric Byrom preaching on Colossians 3:1-14. Honor Sunday School teachers during morning worship.

8 *Keys to Freedom* Groups: Men's, 1 PM, Multi-Purpose Room; Women's, 7 PM, Frankenfields' home.

9 Women's *Keys to Freedom*, 6:30 PM, Godsils' home.

14 Pastor Eric Byrom preaching on 2 Peter 1:5. 🍷🍴

15, 22, 29 Men's and Women's *Keys to Freedom* Groups – see above for times and locations.

21 Elder Matt Godsil preaching on Galatians 5:22-23. Missions Moment during worship with the Bartholomews.

28 Elder Jadaé Fox preaching on Proverbs 2:7-11 and 8:13, 20. 🍷🍴

struggling with temptation, and seeking to live the life Jesus would have them live.

These young Christians often assume that "real" disciples can track their progress in holiness as one does calories on a weight loss app. Instead, they find that (as is the case for everybody) the deeper they go in discipleship, the more they realize how much worse their ongoing sin is than what they thought. Many think God is angry with them, ready to say when they approach the throne

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RADIO FREE NARNIA

(Continued from page 2)

of grace, “Well, well, look who’s slinking in . . .”

The heart can believe and the mouth can confess things the nervous system doesn’t yet feel. Sometimes that part of us—despite all our Sunday learning—panics and wants to perform well enough to deserve the love of God. This can make John 3:16 feel like an advertisement narrator booming, “God so loved the world” while in a low voice speedily saying, “Void where prohibited, some restrictions apply.”

These Christians then withdraw from prayer, and sometimes even worship, until they can “get their lives together.” And, like an addiction to drink or drugs or Turkish delight, the perceived solution only makes their problem worse. Many of them are downcast, not only by their present stumbles but with guilt from their past—things they’ve done, people they’ve hurt, or words they have said.

The picture Lewis presents in Edmund’s encounter strikes at the heart of that problem. First, Aslan talks to Edmund quietly, away from the crowd. Lewis writes, “There is no need to tell you (and no one ever heard) what Aslan was saying, but it was a conversation which Edmund never forgot.”

The wording here echoes the post-resurrection words of Jesus in the garden outside the tomb. When Peter was still in anguish over his denial and abandonment of Jesus, the Lord said to Mary Magdalene, “Go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God’ ” (John 20:17, ESV). Even after their weakest, most failing moment, Jesus was not ashamed to call them brothers—to remind them that God was their Father too, and that he was still their God (Heb. 2:11).

“Here is your brother, and—there is no need to talk to him about what is past.” If we could feel the weight of that glory—of who is saying it and why he’s saying it—we would see an entire world lit up with the Good News. Aslan is fictional, of course, but there is a real Lion of Judah, and maybe he wants to remind us of a truth we’ve

forgotten, perhaps just when we need it most.

(Editor’s note: Russell Moore is the editor in chief of Christianity Today magazine. This article appeared in the April 2024 issue, page 30. Used by permission.)

From the GFC Photo Memory Vault



Panel from a quilt made for the Barbers



GFC Sanctuary under construction ~1990



Grounds crew at work! ~1993



Summer conference “Big Top” 1980



“Ah! There’s A Celebration” 1980



Barnabas Ensemble 1996

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Jadaé Fox	Elder
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Cameron Karger	Treasurer
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Jedaé Fox	
Lori Judd	Missions
Andy Heininger	Worship
Judy Nichols	Prayer Chain
Andy Anschutz	Sound/Power Point
John and Donna Kurtz	TrailNotes

Grace Fellowship Church Community Celebration 2025

On August 23, 2025, the members of Grace Fellowship Church gathered for an evening of food, fellowship, worship, and learning about the plans for the coming year for the church. Here are some glimpses of that event as captured by camera lenses as reminders of our time together—and to show those absent what you missed.



Welcome! - the gathering...



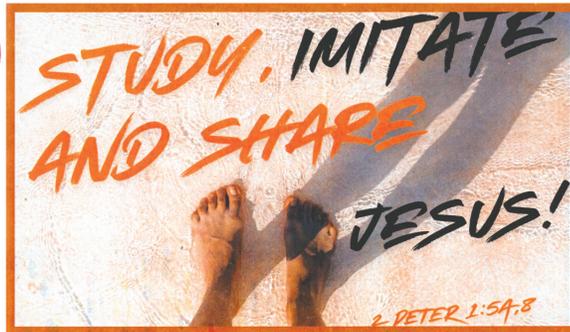
Being served!



Getting bread...



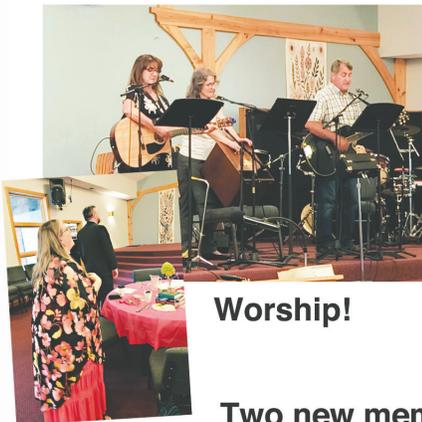
The meal...
and dessert



The theme for the coming year



Assembled...
and full!



Worship!



A theme homily



Our covenant...

Two new members were “officially” welcomed into the GFC family: Elena Nickolaou Jackson and Janine Schwartz. Bill Weberling “officially” membered with us this past week.

A people for God who will go into the world and who make disciples