

BUILDING THROUGH PROVIDENCE

A CAMPAIGN CASE FOR INVESTMENT

An intentional project of Grace Harbor Church to see gospel ministry flourish in our own community and throughout New England



GRACE HARBOR
CHURCH



The church was God's idea. It is his one and only organization plan for world missions. Most of all, it is his beloved Son's beloved, blood-bought bride.

If we are to understand how to pursue the mission faithfully, the local church must be central to identifying, training, sending, and supporting. The mission has been given to Christ's church for Christ's glory.

- *Andy Johnson, Missions*

"I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it." — Matthew 16:18

GOSPEL OPPORTUNITY

Over **225,000 people** live within a 3-mile radius of Grace Harbor Church, and Providence is home to **7 college and university campuses**, all within a 2-mile radius of the church.



WHY PROVIDENCE?

The spiritual landscape of New England means that churches are often small and under resourced. Pastors are often geographically isolated and relationally disconnected. That's not a recipe for long-term gospel success, but for burnout.

The International Mission Board defines an **'unreached people group'** as one with less than 2% evangelicals.

According to the Association of Religion Data, **Rhode Island's population is only 1.7% evangelical**, and 4 out of the top 5 least evangelical urban areas are in New England.

New England soil is among the most spiritually dry in the United States.

OUR IDENTITY

WHO ARE WE AS GRACE HARBOR CHURCH?

We are a church of baptized believers in the gospel of Jesus Christ who affirm the truth of God's word revealed in the Bible. We are continuously being transformed into the image of God's son to display His character and His gospel in the city of Providence and surrounding areas. We live out our statement of faith and covenant through a distinct pursuit of discipleship within our church membership, seeking to invite lost New England into Christ, and strengthening peer churches in the same work.

OUR MISSION

WHY ARE WE HERE?

We seek to display God's glory together by loving one another as Christ has loved us in the gospel and to proclaim that gospel to others around us and throughout the world. As God enables, we aim to encourage the same gospel work in like-minded churches and regional church plants.

OUR VISION

WHERE ARE WE HEADED?

Through ministry built upon God's Word, prayer, and reliance on His Holy Spirit, we aim to see Generational Change in New England as Grace Harbor models faithful church life, discipleship of our families, proclaims the gospel in our communities, trains future pastors, plants new churches, and supports peer churches through trainings and retreats.

OUR FAITH

WHAT DO WE BELIEVE?

We believe the Bible is the highest authority we have to govern what we do and how we live. As a church, however, we also hold to other documents crafted by Biblical scholars and pastors throughout the centuries that guide how we do life as a church. These include:

1. Our Statement of Faith, which presents a concise overview of the cornerstone truths of our church as guided by scripture, and
2. Our Church Covenant that members sign, which is a covenant, summary of expectations, ethical statement, and biblical standard.



OUR GOAL

WHY A CAMPAIGN?

The *Building Through Providence Campaign* is an intentional, set-apart initiative of Grace Harbor to fund the purchase and renovation of our new church building in Providence. This is an exciting next step for our church as we seek to serve our own community, the city of Providence, and the body of Christ throughout New England. Our new church building will allow us, for the first time, to establish a visible and permanent witness in the city from which to grow in and plant from, for the good of God's Kingdom.

A RICH HISTORY

WHERE HAVE WE COME IN 20 YEARS?

In 2002, Grace Harbor was first established by Chris Conte, a church planter of the North American Mission Board (NAMB). Early on, the church struggled to become sustainable, and for its first five to six years, it fluctuated between 15-25 attendees. In 2008 Capitol Hill Baptist Church sent Kevin and Melissa McKay to re-establish Grace Harbor. By God's grace, the church relaunched in 2009 with Kevin as a lead pastor, a core of 35 members, and a tremendous sense of enthusiasm for the future.

Shortly thereafter, Travis and Rebeca Rymer were called from Tennessee to college ministry at Johnson & Wales University in Providence, and concurrently, Travis joined Grace Harbor as a planting pastor of the reinvigorated body. The coming years yielded faithful ministry to the church's members and to the Providence community, including a rich opportunity to help plant more churches (detailed in following sections). In 2012, Grace Harbor's current building was leased, and by 2015, the body had grown to 120 members and more than 200 gathering together to worship on Sundays.

In the summer of 2019, leadership began renovating the leased building in order to accommodate accelerated growth. The church purchased office space to take the pastors offices off site and open up rooms for expansion. This maximized the current space for additional children's ministry rooms and restrooms. It wasn't long before this too was full, and the search for a permanent church home began in earnest, leading to the present day, and the associated project to fund it.

We praise God for years of faithfulness and watchful care over Grace Harbor, and for the faithfulness of so many who have ministered tirelessly to enable the impact we have achieved for the sake of the Kingdom!

Today, Grace Harbor has over 200 members and over 100 children, with between 325 and 350 (very much at capacity of the facility) joyfully gathering on Sunday mornings to worship.



KINGDOM IMPACT

WHAT HAVE WE ACCOMPLISHED?

God's blessing of ministry efforts over nearly 15 years has yielded a humbling array of Gospel-focused impact on our church, the community, and the world.



GOSPEL PROCLAMATION AND GROWTH

At the core of Grace Harbor is our unwavering commitment to preaching the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. Through expository preaching, the church consistently hears God's Word and is disciplined in its meaning and application in their families, careers, relationships, and city. As the Word has been preached, Grace Harbor has grown from 10 members, the group to whom Kevin preached on his very first Sunday, to nearly 300 worshipping on a Sunday morning. By God's grace, our growing body of believers has consistently shared the message of Christ in our community and city, and this personal evangelistic ministry has led to many baptisms. Every week non-Christians are present in our gatherings hearing the Gospel.



COLLEGE MINISTRY

Providence is uniquely dense with colleges and universities with 5 campuses located within 3 miles of our gathering, and Grace Harbor has been blessed with the opportunity to minister to students in numerous ways. In one sense, Grace Harbor grew on the back of college ministry, and today, it continues to be a strategic part of our outreach. We've had one of the only ministries at Johnson and Wales for over 25 years now, and at times, have been the sole witness for Christ there. We have approximately 30 students involved in that ministry, and it continues to grow. Additionally, our church has a growing ministry at Brown University, with a member on staff and 40+ Brown students currently gathering with Grace Harbor.



CHURCH STRENGTHENING AND LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

We believe that partnering with and helping fellow churches is an oft-overlooked call in fulfilling the Great Commission. In recent years, Grace Harbor has become a hub for churches and pastors coming together for further ministry and training. We've been able to do this most visibly through the Simeon Trust and its workshops, where pastors receive training on preaching, and also through our 9Marks Weekender events where pastors are trained on biblical ecclesiology and ministry philosophy. In addition to these formal outlets, we've launched pastoral small groups focused on encouragement and accountability, and we host an annual pastors retreat for church leaders across the six New England states.



CHURCH PLANTING

Since its inception, planting has been a core priority for Grace Harbor, and God has been faithful in using our church for numerous opportunities to grow the Kingdom including planting three churches in southern New England over the years:

1. **Mount Hope Church** in Bristol, RI
2. **Grace Harbor New Bedford** in New Bedford, MA
3. **Grace Harbor Cape Cod** in Hyannis, MA



LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Over the years, Grace Harbor has been intentionally teaching and training godly men for ministry. Throughout the years, hundreds of individuals have received training in expositional preaching, and more than 50 of our own members have had the opportunity to utilize this training to preach the Word during Sunday evening gatherings. This experience has enabled us to serve sister churches throughout New England by providing short and long-term guest preaching, and even to revitalize a church in this manner. Since our relaunch, Grace Harbor has seen 15 of these young men enroll and go through seminary, and we've also brought 6 of them through a formal pastoral internship in preparation for ministry in other churches.



MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

As many families have come through our doors over the years, hundreds of children have been a part of the body of Christ at the church. From the youngest ages through middle and high school, the youth and children's ministry of the church is dedicated to teaching and training the next generation in the Word of God during the formative years. Grace Harbor is grateful to have many in our church committed to facilitating quality biblical content and fellowship for our youth. Currently, our church hosts and co-leads a youth group with other local churches too small to form their own. This provides further church support and enables our youth to develop peer Christian friendships.



MISSIONS AND COMMUNITY

Supporting the work of God's people around the world and at home has long been a core priority, and God has provided targeted opportunities for our church body to support Kingdom work. Our missions partners include 20Schemes in Scotland, Good Churches in India, and a Tyndale Seminary professor in the Netherlands. Within the Providence community itself, Grace Harbor has invested its efforts in several key ways:

- Partnered and served with a local homeless ministry in partnership with Providence Rescue Mission;
- Supported the launch of an organization for fostering and adoptive families that raises awareness among churches of the need for families, and equips churches to care for children through trauma-informed training; and
- Helped inaugurate a biblical counseling center focused on training church leaders to care effectively for their members and communities.

CHALLENGES TO GROWTH

WHAT ARE THE HINDRANCES IN OUR FUTURE?

The leadership of Grace Harbor desires to see the church body expand steadily moving forward, enabling a larger impact for Christ's Kingdom in Providence and throughout New England. As we aim to respond to our call to pursue the mission of preaching, discipling, and growing the church body for Kingdom impact, there are distinct needs that need to be addressed.

GENERAL SPACE AND A LACK OF BUILDING THROUGH PROVIDENCE

Put very simply, Grace Harbor is out of space, and we have exhausted our current facility's potential to accommodate our church body. With a "packed house" each Sunday comes concern regarding building codes, accessibility, safety, and more. Our leadership maintains a conviction regarding one worship service; however, given that we are in a transitional phase with a new building on the horizon, we've made the temporary compromise to use the building's basement as overflow. This, however, is not a sustainable solution, and certainly the current setup is not welcoming to visitors. Without a church home, we are not able to establish the permanent, long-term witness we seek to. Now that we are using the church basement for overflow (as well as Equipping Class before the main meeting), there is quite literally no place for the children to engage.

PROGRAM AND MINISTRY LIMITATIONS

By God's grace, we've been able to launch and grow various ministries over the years that continue to grow and thrive. In our current facility, however, we are unable to host the increasing number of individuals participating (hosting pastors for Simeon Trust trainings, for example). Simply put, we have more pastors who want to attend these events than we have space to accommodate them. In addition, the pews have to be removed for some of these functions (pews are not designed to be removed and returned, as it causes weak braces, broken support pieces, etc.)

Even when we find ways to accommodate events, parking has also become a serious issue. These limitations are also being felt, perhaps most strongly, in our college ministry that has capacity to expand well beyond its current numbers.

LOGISTICS AND GROWTH

From a ministry and membership perspective, Grace Harbor is in a position to expand its staff reasonably in order to enable Kevin and Travis to devote themselves to the preaching of the Word and discipleship and training efforts. However, our facility simply does not allow, practically speaking, for the membership growth required to take this step.

In short: Should Grace Harbor want to successfully grow its ministry in order to fulfill its mission and vision for our community, it is imperative that we solve our facility and space issues.

OUR RESPONSE

HOW DO WE PLAN TO ADDRESS THIS CHALLENGE?

In order to address the glaring need for a church home that accommodates our growing ministry, Grace Harbor Church has purchased a facility and is moving forward with a process to renovate a property and building. Located strategically in Providence, the site not only will allow us to continue to serve our growing community effectively, but the building itself, once renovated, will allow for growth of our membership into the future.

The following is an overview of the priorities of the campaign, and the funding needs associated with each.

1

PROPERTY PURCHASE

We have recently identified and acquired 430 Kinsley Ave. as an ideal building and location for our growing needs. As a former industrial building, it provides a solid structure with approximately 30,000 sq. ft of space. The lot itself includes an additional one acre for parking or future expansion. Its location is in a visible and accessible area in which the city has also designated it as an “opportunity zone” with further developments nearby. The leadership believes the space, size, and location of this building makes it an ideal solution.

The purchase price of the property is **\$2.6M** (one-time purchase cost).

2

BUILDING RENOVATION

In addition to the purchase price of the property, the renovation of the building will make up the bulk of the campaign’s funding. The scope of the work will be extensive, including everything from surrounding space and parking, to structural items like windows and exterior, to interior build-out and all the details that come with.

The church’s staff and volunteers are hard at work to identify costs for the various components of the renovation work, expecting adjustments in the figures as the work continues. With that said, it is estimated that the cost of the renovation will be roughly **\$5M**.

3

PERSONNEL AND LOGISTICS

There are additional costs that come with a project of this scope, which church leadership has worked to contract for this initiative. These include:

- Architectural work and preparation
- General contractors and associated staff
- Campaign organizational partners

We estimate that the associate cost of these project components will be roughly **\$400,000**.

BUILDING THROUGH PROVIDENCE

WHAT IMPACT WILL THIS PROJECT ACTIVATE?

As long as a family is renting a home, they can't truly establish themselves as a long-term fixture in the neighborhood. Cities and towns have long ago stopped providing worship space as part of their city planning, and already, it has become much more difficult for churches to thrive. The window on a church's ability to gain property, in cities in particular, may be getting tighter.

Whether or not it will ever close altogether is tough to say, but we are confident in the Lord's call for us to establish a permanent home in our city at this time. The congregation that makes up Grace Harbor long after we're gone will be well-served by our actions, and by God's grace, thankful for the toil of our current body. By establishing a space we own, we can do all that we've been doing to foster gospel ministry here and throughout New England in a more robust manner.

In addition to this aforementioned sense of *Building Through Providence*, our new and established church home will particularly enable:



Room for growth of the congregation, bringing more souls to Christ, and allowing for logistical growth and ministry in the church through expanded staff and bandwidth across the board;



Capacity for growth in the membership and budget bases, which will allow for **church planting execution** when opportunities arise;



Distinct **visibility** in the city of Providence, bringing a sense of the presence of God and His hand at work to our neighborhood and all who pass by;



Dedicated space for our **youth and college ministries**, which are currently thriving but gravely stifled due to space limitations;



Dedicated space for **men's and women's ministries**, enabling a level of fellowship, teaching and training, and discipleship not available to us now; and



Ample facilities for our **church partnership** activities to grow and thrive, including conferences, pastoral training workshops through Simeon Trust and others, seminars, regional conferences, and more.





A PROACTIVE INITIATIVE

HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH THIS?

In order to fund this targeted initiative, Grace Harbor is moving forward with a special building campaign, entitled *Building Through Providence*. The exact financial goal for this campaign is still to be determined; however, we expect that we will seek to raise between **\$5-\$7 million** to meet this critical need. We are thrilled to share that in this early stage, from our church leaders and campaign committee alone, just over \$1 million already has been pledged. Praise the Lord!

These funds will be sought in the form of one-time commitments and multi-year pledges of up to three years (2023, 2024, and 2025), and represent commitments over and above existing tithes and offerings.

The primary campaign will be carried out during the remainder of the 2023 calendar year, and through the first half of 2024. During the current leadership phase of the initiative, the Campaign Steering Committee, together with the lay leadership of the church, will be making personal commitments, and working with other churches and leaders in the New England area to join together with us.

Following this lead phase, a public launch will be held to announce the initiative to the full congregation, after which members will be personally asked to consider campaign commitments during a church-wide phase.

JOIN US

WHAT ARE WE ASKING OF YOU?

Paul teaches us a lot about partnership in the New Testament. From his letters to the Philippians:

“I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.”

Paul understood that there was no support without partnership. He understood that any support was not a donation to a cause, but rather an investment in some mission or goal, with the goal of a Kingdom return on that investment.

With this biblical concept of partnership in mind, we ask you to join us in this initiative in the following ways:

PRAY

Pray for the life and work of Grace Harbor Church. Pray for our leaders, members, and those in our community, that they would engage with us and turn to Christ for hope and salvation.

GIVE

Consider a leadership investment in the *Building Through Providence* campaign to help us achieve this goal, for the sake of the Gospel in our community.

ADVOCATE

Help us advocate to others the importance of this mission, as opportunities arise.

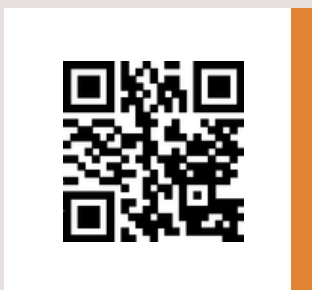


Scan here to join the mission.



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graceharbor.net

A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

Dear Grace Harbor Church and Friends,

As I reflect on what God is doing right now in our church, city, and region, I can't help but be full of thanksgiving and awe. It's impossible to put into words all that God has done in and through our body. His Spirit has truly created a loving community of people who truly are a display of the gospel, and who have faithfully proclaimed that gospel in this city and beyond. I praise the Lord for those who have been partnered in this work with us up until now.

I am also grateful to God for every person that's part of this next season of ministry at Grace Harbor. I'm excited to see our prayer for a permanent home that we can grow in and plant out of finally come to fruition. I trust that our partnership in the gospel will bear much fruit and that God will give increase.

The journey there will no doubt require our trust in God's provision. It will certainly also require sacrifice along the way. By God's grace, this will be good for us. It will prepare for a new season of ministry in which I pray we see even more love for God and one another, more people come to faith in Christ, more churches planted, and more churches working together.

So with a humbled heart full of thankfulness, love, and awe, I can't help but look forward and pray, "Now to Him Who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think according the power that works in us - to Him be glory in the church and Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

In Christ,

Kevin McKay
Lead Pastor

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