

# MISSION OUTREACH NEWS

April - May - June  
2026

Providing Food, Water, and Shelter in Jesus' Name



**GRAIG FLACH**  
Associate Pastor



**PLEASE NOTE:** *I am retiring April 30.  
I will no longer be available for Lake Grove ministry.  
This email address will be disabled. For pastoral needs,  
please contact [reception@lakegrovepres.org](mailto:reception@lakegrovepres.org)  
My many years at Lake Grove have been wonderful.  
God bless you and farewell.*

Dear mission-minded friends and mission partners,

The e-signature above will be attached to my emails for the last weeks of my employment at Lake Grove. Yes, I am on my way into God's next season for my life. While I will not be involved in Lake Grove ministries, I certainly expect to remain a "missionary" -- continuing to share the Good News and love of Jesus in other ways.

I call your attention to the last two lines of the little logo above.

"My many years at Lake Grove have been wonderful." This is true and due in no small way to our shared mission efforts both locally and globally, and my deep admiration for the church members and mission partners who tirelessly work to serve the needy and poor.

"God bless you and farewell." This is from my heart. I pray that God will hold you in the palm of His hand to protect and prosper you, and to "prosper the work of your hands" in the service to which you have been called. May you fare well and feel blessed in the days and years ahead.

May people be drawn to the Lord, and may God be glorified, by our faith-full partnership in the Gospel with the Lord Himself in His plan of redemption for the world.



*Pastor Graig*

## A MESSAGE TO PASTOR GRAIG & LAURA - DEBBIE SANDERS



Dear Graig & Laura,

Thank you for your many years of service to Lake Grove Presbyterian Church. Graig, I am especially thankful for the support and encouragement that you gave Bob over the years. You both made a great team.

I remember when you took over the ministry to Zambia. You were like a duck taking to water! You thrived in that role. I also remember when the church asked you to become the missions pastor. What an appropriate choice.

I always enjoyed when you graced us with your singing voice or your acting ability. You have a wide range of talent.

You took on a lot of additional responsibility when Bob became ill and kept it after his death. Bob and I both appreciated your visit to him in his last days.

You are a faithful servant to the Lord Jesus Christ. I wish you the very best in your retirement. May you find joy in whatever you pursue. I hope you and Laura can enjoy much quality time together as you step out in the next part of your journey.

Gratefully - Debbie Sanders

---

## KASSIS GRAIG - DAVID AND JEN WILLIAMS

As I recall, I met Kassis Graig shortly after he came to LGPC. We not only became friends, but he showed extraordinary kindness to us practically from the beginning. My father-in-law, Don Gundersen, was both gracious and gifted with relationships. I'm sure he deserves credit for introducing us and nurturing our friendship.

During his time at LGPC, my wife Gale Gundersen (Williams) and I were in Southern Lebanon. I think Graig visited us a couple of times while there. Currently a place of violent military activity. After South Lebanon we spent six years in Salalah located in the Sultanate of Oman near Yemen. I don't think Kassis Graig went there. However, when we located to Mafraq, on the Syrian border in north Jordan, he came at least twice. He is gifted in leading large groups. During Kassis Graig's last trip here he brought a wonderful, Christ focused group to us. We loved having them and till now many Syrians remember our time together.



Kassis Graig wanted to display his cultural knowledge to me. Consequently on one of my trips to Lake Grove he proudly brought out a tray of "Turkish" (Arabic coffee). He meant well but as soon as I tasted it I realized I hadn't trained him properly. After that important incident I've had to remind him: Coffee, no sugar please!

Graig has talents that are so crucial in ministry. He demonstrates love and care to everyone he interacts with. Thank you Kassis Graig. We love and appreciate you!

With love,  
David and Jen from the Syrian border

“When it comes to missions in the church , the PASTOR either holds the key to the front door or holds the padlock.” - George Murray

## PRIVILEGED TO BE BOOKENDS TO PASTOR GRAIG'S MINISTRY - SUSIE CROWELL

I have the distinct privilege of getting to bookend Pastor Graig's ministry at LGPC. I have known Pastor Graig since he started at our church almost 25 years ago. I was newly ordained to serve a three-year Session term, as a Christian Education and Nurture Commission (now known as Discipleship) elder which Pastor Graig was overseeing. He was bright and cheerful, a little cocky and sometimes unintentionally hurt my feelings - I was, perhaps, a little too sensitive. It takes a while to get to know someone. We had a working relationship but not yet a friendship.

In 2009, I had the wonderful opportunity to travel with a Go-Team from LGPC to visit our World Vision mission partners in Zambia under Pastor Graig's leadership. I was not completely sure of what to expect but trusted that the Lord had moved my heart to travel to Zambia. It became a fabulous trip! Graig led by example the whole time. The wonderful team was made up of LuAnn Yocky (then working for World Vision as our Liaison), Mark Scarlett, Melinda Gordon, Joan Klinkhammer, Cherith MacRitchie-representing our Youth Program, Steve Wright, and Pastor Graig. It was on this trip that my mind was made up: God changed my heart regarding what Pastor Graig was all about!



Pastor Graig thrives and shines in the Mission environment. He is widely known and respected. He has a personal touch with all whom he comes in contact — villagers as well World Vision Staff in the region. He exudes Christ's love for all. He remembers peoples' names from year to year- and mind you, all the names are not easy to remember. He is "Jesus with skin on." We met so many people including his own sponsored children, some of whom are named for his wife and children! What an honor and a confirmation of touching peoples' lives in a Godly and personal way.



In 2012, I was again fortunate to travel to Zambia with a great group of people from our church. They included: Pam Fogg, a master accountant and resource to newly formed "Women's Savings Groups" in Sinezongwe, Mary Austin, Kathleen Fast (former youth director at church,) Alan Schiffer-as the World Vision Liaison, and Pastor Graig. Again, Pastor Graig exuded all the Christ-like characteristics he had on the previous trip and knew even more people's names!!!

Fast forward to 2023, when I am asked once again to serve on Session -now on Missions Outreach. Graig is the "Missions Pastor". I have thoroughly enjoyed my time serving on this Commission and have learned a great deal from Pastor Graig regarding all our Mission partners locally and Internationally. He knows all our partners well and remembers personal information about so many of them that endear him to them. He has a wonderful assistant in Kristi Werner (successor to the previous wonderful assistant Sheri Brown) who helps to keep things organized. I am picking Graig's brain as he prepares to retire to start the next chapter of his life. I will remain on Missions another three years to help carry on the good work that he and the Elders before me have begun.

I can say with full assurance that we have a friendship and I will miss my friend and our Pastor.

## A GIFT OF VISION - WENDY BAMONTE

When Pastor Graig first shared his idea of taking a group of musicians on a Music Mission trip to Zambia, I will admit I was skeptical. I wondered how our musical cultures would interact. Would we really be able to communicate musically across such different traditions?

But Graig believed in the vision—and he gently but persistently encouraged me to come along.

What I experienced there was truly life-changing. We discovered firsthand that music is a universal language. Even when our spoken words were different, we were able to share the love of Christ and the joy of unity through singing together. Cultural barriers seemed to fall away as we worshiped side by side.

One of the great gifts of the trip was hearing the vibrant music of Zambia. The singing was rich and full, and the songs were filled with lively percussion and energy. We didn't just listen—we learned the songs ourselves. In fact, our organist, Jeff, was so inspired that he later arranged and published one of the songs we learned there.

The trip also changed the way I think about everyday life. In Zambia I learned something very simple yet profound: water is life. Seeing how precious and scarce water can be reshaped the way I think about the resources we often take for granted.

When I celebrated my 25th anniversary in ministry at Lake Grove, a well was drilled in my honor. It is a gift that still humbles me, and I look forward to the day when I can visit that well—and meet the child my family now sponsors there. Sponsoring a child has brought unexpected joy and meaning to our family, and it all began with Graig opening that door.

I am deeply grateful for Pastor Graig's vision, his encouragement, and his willingness to lead us into experiences that stretch us and deepen our faith. Because of this mission, many of us were able to witness the power of music, the beauty of another culture, and the unifying love of Christ in a profound and lifechanging way. Thank you Pastor Graig!



## MANNA MINISTRY

When it comes to Manna Ministries, Pastor Graig always had his eyes open and his ear to the ground for volunteers. He seems to have a sixth sense about where to steer people who express an interest in volunteer work. Occasionally, I would mention to him that we were short on drivers. Within a week, I would get an email with someone's name. He kept us well supported! Thank you Pastor Graig for your years of faithfulness to this vital ministry!

Carol Brownrigg



## THANKFUL FOR PASTOR GRAIG - SALLY LEFEBER

Pastor Graig has been one of my pastors for over 20 years. God put him in my path to lead me on a journey from reluctant, tagalong church attendee to the committed Christian I am today. I cannot express how grateful I am for his teaching, his role-modelling, and his unwavering commitment to mission work. It was life-changing to work with him and Salaam International (David Williams), coming alongside other Christians to share Jesus' love with Syrian refugees. Graig always displayed love, respect, and tenderness for everyone he met in that region. And I'll never forget exploring the holy sites of Jerusalem with him, with his teachings that forever changed the way I read the Bible. One of the more memorable moments was walking through the very wet, cramped and dark Hezekiah's Tunnel (2 Kings 20:20, 2 Chronicles 32:30) with him! Graig, you are one of my heroes, and I wish you all the best in this next, great chapter of your life. You will be missed.



## A TRIBUTE OF GRATITUDE FOR A FAITHFUL SERVANT OF GOD - LEOPOLD DIOUF

There are encounters that God places along our path that leave a lasting mark on both our lives and our ministry. I first met Pastor Graig FLACH outside the United States in the context of missionary service: The Go Team Outreach Mission. From that very moment, I was struck by the simplicity of his heart, the depth of his faith, and his sincere commitment to the work of God.

Over the years, I have had the privilege of observing in him the qualities of a true servant of Christ: a consistent faithfulness to the Word of God, a genuine love for the Church, and a steadfast commitment to mission, both in his local ministry and in his support for international outreach.

Pastor Graig did not merely exercise a ministry; he embodied a calling. Through his teaching, encouragement, and personal testimony, he has strengthened many believers and supported numerous workers engaged in the mission field. His name is still hanging on the lips of many Senegalese people. His influence has extended beyond borders and has touched lives far beyond the congregation he faithfully served.

Today, as he enters retirement, we give thanks to God for the many years he has devoted faithfully to the service of the Lord, extending the love of God to many people in Senegal. His life reminds us of the words of Scripture:

**“Feed the flock of God, which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.” 1Peter 5:2.**

We express our deep gratitude for his friendship, his support, and his powerful testimony. We pray that the Lord will continue to bless him and his family in this new season of life, and that the fruit of his ministry will continue to bear lasting fruit for the glory of God.

With sincere gratitude to the Lord - Mr. Léopold DIOUF, Outreach Mission Worker  
DAI Senegal MCD Country Director.



# A PROMISE KEPT: EIGHT YEARS WITH FAMILY PROMISE OF TUALATIN VALLEY - MICHELLE LANTOW

What does it look like when a pastor sees a need and says yes — and keeps saying yes? For eight years, Pastor Graig has been the driving heart behind Lake Grove's partnership with Family Promise of Tualatin Valley (FPTV), shaping an enduring mission relationship in the life of our congregation.

In May 2018, Pastor Graig opened the Courtyard Room on a Sunday afternoon and invited the congregation to ask: what does it look like for Lake Grove to respond to family homelessness in our own backyard? He didn't just open a door; he walked through it with us. When FPTV launched its Day Center in 2019, Lake Grove joined the rotational shelter network — volunteers setting up sleeping areas, preparing meals, and offering families the profound gift of being welcomed. Pastor Graig modeled what it looked like to show up, and the congregation followed his lead.

When COVID-19 arrived, FPTV pivoted to a motel-based model and Lake Grove pivoted too — stepping in with grocery support so families could cook their own meals. Through it all, Pastor Graig kept Family Promise before our congregation, reminding us that the need hadn't disappeared just because the model had changed. Then in 2023, when FPTV converted the former Quality Inn in Tigard into Bridge to Home — the largest family shelter in Washington County — and needed a commercial kitchen while theirs was being built, Pastor Graig championed a solution: Lake Grove would open ours. For more than two years, meals were prepared here and transported to Tigard, a quiet partnership that families felt at their dinner table.



Today: Woven into Our Congregation

That is Pastor Graig's legacy: he nurtured this partnership through every season, and it has taken deep root. Lake Grove members now volunteer in the Bridge to Home kitchen, teach Financial Literacy classes, lead youth choir visits, organize food drives, and support Lake Grove Kids fundraisers for FPTV. FPTV's 2024 Annual Report lists Lake Grove among its honored community partners — a recognition that reflects not just what we give, but what we've built together. Thank You, Pastor Graig!

As Pastor Graig prepares to retire in April, we find ourselves reflecting on the faithful thread that runs through every chapter of this story. He saw a need, gathered a community, and kept saying yes — through a pandemic, through pivots, through the quiet work of grocery bags and kitchen prep and choir concerts in a shelter hallway. It was Pastor Graig who made sure we showed up. If you hosted a family, packed a bag, stirred a pot, or decorated a building — you are part of this story. And so is he. Thank you, Pastor Graig.



## Pray for our 2026 Mission Partners

Agros \* Care & Share \* Family Promise \* Lake Oswego Transitional Shelter Ministry (LOTSM)  
Love INC \* Manna Ministry \* Pink Eraser \* Portland Rescue Mission  
Presbyterian Urban Network (PUN) \* Salaam International \* Salvation Army West  
Senegal Ministries \* Shepherd's Door \* WaterAfrica \* Woodburn Ministries  
World Vision \* YD Adventures

## AGROS

Graig is in his element when out of his element. When Graig traveled with us on our final visit to Bella Vista in Honduras in 2018, I realized he should write the manual on how to be a great Mission Trip participant. Graig jumps in to learn about people, staff, programs, dreams, goals and tries to pick up a new language as he does it! He is "present" in all ways and shows no signs of tiring.

Graig picked up the nickname "Goyo", short for Gregorio. However, one of our team member mixed up Goyo with "Gordo" (fatty) and that became his nickname instead!

- Andrea Anderson



***Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I, Send me!" - Isaiah 6:8***



What does a heart for mission look like? Enthusiastic engagement. Focus on the people. Commitment to the program's value. Spiritual awareness. A heart for mission looks a lot like Graig Flach!

Traveling with Graig on Agros trips to Honduras in 2018 and then to Guatemala in 2019, I saw all of this in action. And action is the word! Graig brings his special energy to each day, engaging with team members, staff, and, most importantly, the Agros community members, through attentive dialog, thoughtful questions, and supportive prayer. From blowing bubbles with kids to speaking on behalf of LGPC at a festive ceremony awarding property deeds to families, Graig is fully present in the Agros in the villages. His energy continues on long bus rides on winding roads or lengthy plane rides – by the way, did you know he's a New York Times crossword puzzle whiz? During discussions at team meals and debriefing sessions, Graig's excellent questioning and summarizing skills focus on the big picture and reflect on the value of our church's partnership. We especially have appreciated his continued support of Agros back home, helping raise awareness of the life-changing work God is doing through Agros in Central America.

Thank you, Graig! May your heart for mission find new avenues for involvement as you retire. Well done.

- Jan Pearce

***And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders, make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversations be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. - Colossians 4:3-6***

## A MESSAGE FROM DAVE STRONG

Graig and I first met almost 25 years ago, in September 2001. He was the new mission pastor; I was the new mission elder. We found that we had a lot in common: fellow Lewis & Clark alums, both with some history in Colorado, both with a passion for mission. Over the years we've traveled some, shared laughs and endured budget meetings, and maybe tipped a Flag or Gazelle (or two). Working with Graig, and traveling together, has always been a pleasure. His bright smile, cheerful disposition and spontaneous sense of humor endear him to everyone he meets.



We have, I believe, made a good team. For 25 years we have advocated together for the "missionality" of Lake Grove Pres, with great success. I think I speak for many in saying that he has helped keep the church on an even keel these past few years, and richly deserves his upcoming retirement and whatever comes next. He has many friends and lasting relationships, in Senegal, in Zambia and elsewhere, who will join in honoring his commitment to the Least and the Lost, in celebrating this milestone together, and in fondly remembering how he has touched all our lives. Whoever assumes Graig's mission pastor role going forward will have very large shoes to fill.

Dave Strong



## A MESSAGE FROM JEAN BRUNSON

I had the chance to travel on a mission trip to Zambia with Pastor Graig in 2005. Watching his deep care for the people of Zambia and his ability to connect and interact with the people there was so heartwarming. I felt like he was in his element when he got to preach on a Sunday morning at an outdoor Zambian church service. I am thankful for the heart Pastor Graig has for people both locally and globally.

## LOVE INC OF CLACKAMAS COUNTY - STUART SMITH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



"Every encounter I've had with Pastor Graig has been filled with his infectious smile and profound wisdom. In every conversation, he leaves behind insights that reflect his deep love for his Savior and his church. I am consistently impressed by his years of service and dedication to the LGPC fellowship. As a director of an outside ministry, I appreciate his generosity, which is only matched by his hospitality and genuine interest in how our ministry could help the LGPC community know Jesus better. Thank you, Pastor Graig, for being such a wonderful example of following Jesus."

## WORLD VISION

Dear Lake Grove Church family,

As Graig enters this well-deserved season of retirement, I want to share words of gratitude on behalf of World Vision—and personally, as someone who privileged to call him a friend.

From his first days at Lake Grove in September 2001 to the present, Graig has embodied a deep, thoughtful commitment to global engagement that has shaped our church's partnership with World Vision. Over the past decades, Lake Grove has been an extraordinary partner with forever impact, and Graig's leadership is central to that story!

Nowhere is this more evident than in the Sinazongwe Area Program in Zambia, where Graig's long and faithful involvement helped form not just effective work, but enduring relationships. What always stood out about Graig's leadership is the way he showed up—not as an outsider with answers, but as a listener, a learner, and a trusted partner.

Graig demonstrated an uncommon ability to develop genuine relationships and an uncanny ability to remember names and family connections! This was particularly true with Sinazongwe pastors—relationships marked by humility, mutual respect, and deep trust. Those partnerships endured because they were never transactional; they were rooted in shared Biblical purpose and authentic friendship. Those pastors still speak of Graig not simply as a partner, but as a friend.



From World Vision's perspective, this kind of leadership is rare and profoundly impactful. Graig helped model what it looks like when churches and communities walk together over time—patiently, faithfully, and with integrity. The influence of that approach continues to be felt in Sinazongwe and more broadly in Zambia, not only in improved outcomes for children and families, but in the confidence and strength of World Vision Zambia staff and community leaders who know they are valued and respected.

More personally, I'm deeply grateful for the friendship Graig and I developed over the years. I admire his wisdom, his joy and humor, along with his ability to hold both local pastoral care and global engagement with equal seriousness and grace. It's an honor to work alongside him and to witness firsthand the respect he has earned—from colleagues, partners, and friends around the world. To our Lake Grove congregation friends: thank you for sharing Graig with the wider world for so many years. His legacy reaches far beyond any one place, and it reflects the values our church has lived out consistently since he first arrived.

With gratitude, respect, and warmest personal wishes for the road ahead as Graig steps into this next season... may it be one of renewal and joy—for him, for Laura, and for Ariel and Zoe—and may the road ahead be marked by connection, purpose, and gratitude for God's blessings.

Alan Shiffer

Senior Director, Philanthropy  
World Vision U.S.



## HONORING GRAIG FLACH - LUANN YOCKY

Graig has always been enthusiastic about our church's missions focus, and he supported our partners both near and far, local and international, through regular communications and personal visits. Financial and prayer support were always the critical foundation provided by our church through Graig's understanding of the various needs presented to us.

Many of our church members had the privilege of participating in a number of mission trips to Zambia which were led by Graig. He had an amazing ability to recall the names and significant stories of villagers in the Sinazongwe region, and our friends there recognized his genuine interest in their families, villages, projects, and faith. Visiting sponsored children and their families was also a very moving highlight to the visits.



I think the pastors of the churches in that region, as well as those we knew in Lusaka, Zambia's capital, readily recognized the genuine interest Graig maintained in each visit to churches, villages, pastors, World Vision staff members, and local chiefs. Graig's ability to remember stories heard on previous trips was always remarkable to the visiting team members.

I believe that Graig was gifted by God to provide the leadership he demonstrated not just at home and in our church, but also to the many people he met near and far. We witnessed his concern for each as a pastor and friend. I will never forget his Christ-like example, and there are so many more who surely echo the same appreciation.



How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

Isaiah 52:7

### MORE THAN A MISSION PASTOR - KRISTI WERNER

Unlike everyone else in these pages I have not had the opportunity to travel with Pastor Graig into the mission field on an international level, but I have had the opportunity to witness his love for those that we serve in the local mission field firsthand. You can tell how much each ministry means to him just by the way that he speaks about them and how he interacts with the leaders of each group.

I have also witnessed his love for this congregation. Pastor Graig cares for you all so much more than you will ever realize. He puts everyone's needs ahead of his own and he does it with the joy of the Lord. I am so thankful that I have had the opportunity to witness that kind of love for a congregation firsthand!

Like you, I am sad that Pastor Graig is leaving Lake Grove ... but we will all still be connected. Even away from LGPC he is still our brother in Christ. While we may not get to see him every day or in most cases on Sunday morning, we are still a family and will continue to be a part of the bigger family of God together.

I am so thankful to Graig for bringing me into the fold here at Lake Grove almost 4 years ago. I'm sad to lose my "missions mentor" and I will miss our weekly meetings where we can catch up on our lives and discuss how to best serve our mission partners. But most of all I am thankful for all that I have learned from Graig and I am excited to see where his future leads him!

## WAY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS MINISTRY



Dear Pastor Graig -

Malick and I would like to thank God for your life and your various ministries.

We will never forget the wisdom and vision that the Lord has placed within you.

I remember during your first visit to Saint Louis with LuAnn in Malick's office, you told me something that Pastor Bob Sanders had said about me. I don't know if you know this, but it was a confirmation of my calling and a new beginning to serve the Lord.

Another thing we cannot forget in Saint Louis is your awareness campaign on LGPC about the ministry with the Talibé children in Saint Louis, which allowed us to have the necessary funds for a year and a half. It touched and changed many lives.

We are convinced that the Lord will continue to use you according to His will and for His glory.

Malick and Feluine

---

### SHARING IN MINISTRY - PASTOR SUSAN GRAHAM

I have not had the privilege of traveling with Graig on a mission trip, but I have watched and worked with him as he has encouraged and sent many mission teams and individuals out into the world in the way and love of Christ.

My earliest memory of working with Graig in mission efforts was when I was serving as the Director of Children's Ministry, and he, along with Pastor Bob, invited me into the fold of the Senegal ministry—encouraging a long-term, faithful attentiveness to this mission partner. This way of doing mission at Lake Grove—long-term partnerships that attend to the holistic needs of communities and individuals—is a beautiful expression of the gospel: God's deep love for the world and its flourishing.



There is both a humility and a boldness in Pastor Graig. As he encourages people and teams in the work of sharing the gospel, he grounds them in the call to listen first, to be humble learners, and then, as partnerships grow, to be bold in expressing the love and saving work of Jesus Christ. Be prepared, as it says in 1 Peter 3:15, "to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." There are seeds of hope all throughout the world, carried within people who have been impacted by the mission efforts of Lake Grove under Pastor Graig's leadership. Because of God's faithfulness, these seeds will reap a harvest of joy and new life in Christ. What a privilege and delight it is to witness even a portion of it.

***The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.***

***Isaiah 61:1***

## A NOTE FROM SHERI BROWN

One of the highlights of my working career was being a Pastoral Assistant for 17 years at Lake Grove supporting Pastor Matt Hilgaertner, Pastor Graig Flach and Pastor Brent James. Now that Pastor Graig is preparing to retire, I wanted to share a few thoughts about his ministry at Lake Grove. Pastor Graig always made me feel like a “Partner” in ministry work and not just a hired assistant. I observed his love of the Lord and how he sought God’s guidance for wherever it would lead.



**“Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.” Romans 12:1-2**



He was ambitious in his efforts and sought to put a special touch on things wherever he could. He wanted to see the Word of God made accessible to people here and afar and it was always his hope that people would look at the efforts of Lake Grove, see the love of Jesus and turn to Christ and be saved.

Some of my mission ministry highlights working with Pastor Graig includes serving as a Zambia GoTeam member in 2006 and 2016. Seeing Makonkoto School, the provision of clean drinking water, and the special projects Lake Grove sponsored made a life-changing impact on me! Not to forget climbing Mount Makonkoto to get a greater area view and better pictures of the school. My knees will never be the same!

Getting to be directly involved with Lake Groves 20+ Mission Partners was also a highlight. Keeping their efforts displayed on the Mission Wall in the Gathering Area and putting on a Mission Fair every-other year in the Fellowship Hall also helped the church see in-person the impact of their Christian Witness locally, regionally, and across the globe.

May Lake Grove continue to carry the torch even as Pastor Graig retires, to share the love of Jesus Christ to our needy world. Bless you, Pastor Graig, in whatever comes next for you!



**I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you. I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” Philippians 1:3-6**

## MEMORIES OF LUSAKA, ZAMBIA - JEFF WOOD

One memory that stands out to me from a mission trip with Graig happened shortly after we arrived in Lusaka. We had a bit of free time, and a few of us decided to take a short walk over to a nearby church. We walked in and immediately noticed the pipe organ up in the gallery, one of only a few organs in the whole country of Zambia. There was a group down front rehearsing, and as they wrapped up, Graig went and introduced himself. Moments later we were invited up to the gallery to see and play the organ! This was my first glimpse of Pastor Graig “in his element” - finding common ground and connection with people in every place we visited. I got to see the meaningful and lasting relationships that Graig has forged with the people we visited on that trip.



These relationships have endured, and continue now 10 years after that trip I was on. Graig has shared updates over the years about some of the people we met, and not too long ago shared some photos and videos from Nkandabbwe School, and how much their music program has grown. Since I had an organ concert coming up and was thinking about what we might receive an offering for, I asked him if they had any further need. Well, after some back and forth with the music teacher, Graig produced a list of needed instruments and their cost, we received generous donations at the concert, and I recently saw videos of students in Zambia trying out their new trumpets, drums, and trombones, and praising God that they no longer need to share one trumpet between multiple students. I've always believed the power of music to lift spirits and create connection, but I never could have imagined that my small efforts on the organ bench could make a tangible difference in the lives of students on the other side of the globe. Graig's leadership through this project has had a meaningful impact on those students, their teachers, and this staff member. Thank you, Pastor Graig!



# PASTOR GRAIG IN ACTION OVER THE YEARS!



## Contact Information

Pastor Graig Flach

[graig@lakegrovepres.org](mailto:graig@lakegrovepres.org)

Elder, Susie Crowell

[susiemcrowell@lakegrovepres.org](mailto:susiemcrowell@lakegrovepres.org)

Kristi Werner, Program Assistant, Mission

[kristi@lakegrovepres.org](mailto:kristi@lakegrovepres.org)