

The Flavor of Grace

We are contemporary in our style

Dress is informal, music is more than traditional, architecture is functional
Atmosphere is “laid back” – we use first names, humor, user friendly.
We are flexible and adaptable, contemporary means “with the times.”
Teaching is creative and builds people up
Religious symbols are few, but used when appropriate, verbiage avoids “Christianese”
We are seeker sensitive, but not seeker driven. We will not do or say anything that will embarrass a guest or host.
We are inclusive rather than exclusive.

We are volunteer driven

Our paid-staff develop and lead volunteers, multiply themselves through non-paid laborers
Some high-specialty staff serve the organization - janitorial, bookkeeping, IT, tech
We unleash people. We try to put right people in right places, we value spiritual giftedness, and design.
We operate in teams. Leadership is shared and a team effort-decentralized as much as possible.
If head of the Body (Christ) leads someone to do something that we (corporate) haven’t committed to doing, we count on these entrepreneurs to initiate, lead, promote, “own” their unique enterprise.
We have an outward focus. We look for meaningful ways to serve our community, to give back
We invest in, raise up and encourage volunteer leadership We especially encourage male leadership.

We count on small groups for connecting and transformation

We do not place a high value on traditional adult Christian education
Small groups are everywhere, in every ministry, at every age
Small groups or small functional teams are a major place where the community really operates.
Caring for people takes place primarily in small groups.
We don’t have formal membership. If you are in a group and ministering, you belong!

Evangelism is primarily relational not event oriented

We encourage/expect people to guide their friends to Christ, few public appeals
We encourage, train and resource people to reach their friends.
We present the gospel in relevant ways to everyone, from first grade up.
We take advantage of key times of the year to invite friends to evangelism oriented events

We embrace generous, grace-based giving

Tithing is not held as normative or required
We look for the “sweet spot” of bang for the buck. Chevrolet not Cadillac
Giving, not selling for a profit, is our approach to raising resources. We don’t fundraise

We are committed to the World Missions enterprise

We support few missionaries at a substantial level rather than many at lower levels
Primarily we support people whom God raises up out of Grace.
Primarily, we support people working among “unreached” populations.
We encourage and promote, self-funded short term missions trips for High School and above.
We are committed to our Missions budget growing each year.
We are committed to being a part of ministering to the poor, the widows, and the children of the world.

We are committed to the nuclear family

We are family centered in our children’s ministries, viewing the family as a whole unit.
We think “church” should be relevant for every age, i.e., children, youth, young adults.
Marriage and parent training are crucial to us. We practice infant dedication, believer’s baptism.
We welcome every child who comes through our doors, including special needs children in our programs.