



REJOICE!

The Apostle Paul writes in Philippians, "**Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again, rejoice!**" (Phil. 4:4). His letter to the Philippians is often called the Epistle of Joy because the word "joy" appears in its various forms some sixteen times in this short letter. Paul could rejoice "in the Lord" because of the forgiveness, new life, eternal salvation, and so many other blessings that were his because of Jesus and his loving faithfulness. Satan, of course, wants to rob us of joy. Read **Psalm 73**, which we used in our Bible studies this week, as an example. But God gives us reasons to rejoice in many different ways other than those mentioned above. I hope you'll **REJOICE** with me as I share with you what has given me so much joy these past several months here at **The Point of Grace**.

Rejoice with me in some very special college students whom we serve and who now serve with us. When these students were asked if they would be willing to host The Gathering on their campuses, they responded with an eager and joyful, "Yes!" No cajoling or encouragement needed. They eagerly and willingly grasped the opportunity.

When we met with them in April to talk about forming a **Collegiate Council** to plan, schedule, and implement the campus ministry we do here in the Milwaukee area, they were eager and willing to serve. On June 5, we had our first formal meeting. Seven were there in person. Four joined us by Skype from various places around the state. The **Collegiate Council** is taking shape! Planning has begun on future meetings, a retreat, future speakers, and the like. When I walk on college campuses and pass students on the way to our TPOG Bible classes or our Gatherings, I think about that what we have at TPOG contradicts all the studies about this age group and church. The studies indicate that many young men and women are losing their faith (if they had faith to begin with), are heading away from Christ, and may well be lost forever. But what a joy to be around the Christian students at TPOG!

Here is what TPOG students have shared about themselves:

- They are motivated by Jesus' love for them!
- They want to learn how better to defend their faith against the spiritual attacks they and their fellow students are receiving!
- They are eager to share the joy and security found in Christ with their fellow students!
- They willingly sacrifice their time so that together we can help make God's faithfulness and love known to more and more college students!

What can you do to help?

- Pray regularly for our **Collegiate Council**. Pray that God keep these young men and women faithful to studying his Word and going to church.
- Pray that we might receive some special funding for an overnight retreat in August for spiritual growth, team building, and planning. Or consider making a special gift to help make this retreat a reality.
- And don't forget to "rejoice in the Lord always" for these college students!

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Don Thompson
TPOG Campus Pastor



A Student Perspective



Stephen Avery
—Milwaukee School of Engineering—
To supporters of The Point of Grace Campus Ministry:

My name is Stephen Avery and I am a student at MSOE (Milwaukee School of Engineering). This past fall, I started to get involved with The Point of Grace campus ministry in the Milwaukee area. I had the privilege of playing guitar in the praise band for a few services at the building on the UW-Milwaukee campus. The service was great, the message was right, and the congregation was very warm and welcoming. However, there was something lacking from the building that surprised me: college students. Very few students outside the praise band attended the services that I went to. It sort of perplexed me; I was happy that such a welcoming group was so willing to minister to college students and I really wanted to be part of this family, yet I seemed to be one of the few students to think so. Students today must be looking for something different that TPOG's services were not bringing to the table. As you may know, The Point of Grace recently sold its building and moved to a smaller facility a couple doors down the street. At first, one may think that this is a bad sign and that TPOG's ministry might be falling behind with today's students. However, that is just the opposite. I strongly believe that this is a step in the right direction and that The Point of Grace can now help Milwaukee's college students spiritually better than ever.

We all know that our faith in Christ is not bound to a building but is a relationship that follows us in all parts of our lives. Likewise, campus ministry is not bound to a building and can be more effective if one thinks "outside the box" and reaches out to students. That is what The Point of Grace is now focusing on, and from what I've seen in the last few months, it is definitely working. TPOG is still going from campus to campus, hosting weekly Bible studies with each school, but what it is doing that pushes its ministry to the next level is a new monthly event called **The Gathering**.

The Gathering is not your typical bible study, nor is it merely a social event. It moves from campus to campus, uniting Christian students from the various schools into a community, rather than creating separate groups at each school. Each month, a theme for **The Gathering** is selected. For example, in March, the event at MSOE was titled, "My Life in Crime." Luke Thompson gave a very engaging presentation to about fifty students that created very good discussions and also made us think about topics in ways that we never had before. In fact, the majority of the material that he presented were actually secular works. He showed clips from "Breaking Bad" and "Dexter" and asked us to find common themes and archetypes of the "crime genre" of the TV shows. After about an hour of that, he then pulled up a couple Bible passages that supported what we discovered from discussing these TV shows. It had the usual law and gospel, but it was presented in such a new and refreshing way.

The message was not watered down, but it was given in a way that did not seem pushy to anyone who was not a Christian, as they might feel uncomfortable during a typical Bible study or worship service. It is the perfect event to bring your college friends to. There is free food to entice your friends with; the presentation and warm hospitality engages their attention and makes them see how and why Christians think like we do. To me, this is what campus ministry is about. It brings Christians together in a safe environment and creates an atmosphere that makes those who are new or returning to Christianity feel comfortable and informs them in a very engaging manner.

Yes, the building is gone, but that does not mean that The Point of Grace Campus Ministry is dead or dying. As mentioned above, we are just getting started and are very excited for the future. That is why I am asking you to please consider giving a donation to the Point of Grace. The ministry is growing in a new and exciting way and we are reaching new college students with every event that we hold.

Sincerely,
Stephen Avery

Upcoming Events

All are welcome! Please join us at any events listed below

- Annual Meeting to elect Board of Directors — June 23rd at 2:30pm
⇒ Contact leadership@thepointofgrace.net to be listed as a candidate for the Board of Directors
- Collegiate Council Monthly Meeting — July 17th at 6:30pm
- Leadership Retreat for Collegiate Council — Late August, date TBD
- **The Gathering** at UWM — September 11th at 7pm — Union Room 191