

Bridge Street House of Prayer



1055 BRIDGE STREET, GRAND RAPIDS MI
info@bshop.org • www.bshop.org
www.facebook.com/bridgestreethouseofprayer • twitter.com/B_S_H_O_P

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THE BSHOP IS A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY SURRENDERED TO THE LOVE OF JESUS WORKING IN US AND THROUGH US TO BRING TRANSFORMATION TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD THAT WILL MULTIPLY IN THE CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS THROUGH COMMUNITIES OF PRAYER.

SO WHAT?

John 17:20, 21 "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me."

Unity. It's a word that is used often in prayer meetings and in discussions about the current state of the Church. It is something that most people would agree is critical to, and is sorely lacking in the Church. It was the basis for Paul's first letter to the Corinthian church. So important is it that it was the very thing that Jesus Himself prayed for us at the end of His earthly life. That we would be one, just as He and the Father are one. Wow, think about a church that you have been to that can say that about themselves, much less two *different* churches, especially from different denominations! And yet, this was Jesus prayer for us as the collective Church. One. Unity.

Yet, why are there so many walls and so much division in the Church today? Scripture tells us that Jesus' word do not return to Him empty, but accomplish the very thing they are sent out for. So, why do we have churches all over this city that wont even talk to the church across the street?

Could it be that in all of our talk about unity, we are missing the greater point that Jesus was making? Perhaps unity is not so much about us as it is about Him. Look at what Jesus says in John 17:21...

So that... So that what? So that... the world may know...

It appears that for Jesus, unity was not the end goal. Unity was not a means unto itself. Rather, Jesus' prayer was that the unity of the Church would point to a greater reality. His desire was that the oneness of the Church would be a reflection of the Kingdom of God. That the unity of the Church would actually be a testimony about Jesus *so that* the world may know that He is alive. Maybe the fractured nature of today's Church is an indication that we have taken our eyes off from a greater - the greatest - goal and have spent too much time looking at ourselves. Perhaps it is time to put our efforts back toward the greater purpose of exalting Jesus.

Recently I was preaching at Crossroads Bible Church and I had lot of folks ask me how things are going down at the BSHOP. My answer was the same for everyone that asked. The thing that I am most excited about is the strength of our team here on Bridge Street – a team that is unified in its desire to see Jesus' name exalted and His Gospel preached here on the West Side. Not that we do things perfectly; we all have our own differences and occasional disagreements. But we are learning what Jesus meant about unity and I take joy that after adding three staff and several volunteers in the last several months, I can say that our team is strong and unified as we look to Jesus together. I believe that God is going to use this team to display His glory and power in such a way that we will see the dry bones of the West Side become a vast army.

Ryan Waalkes

“SO THAT
THE WORLD
MAY BE-
LIEVE THAT
YOU HAVE
SENT ME...”

FALL @ THE PAVILION

"...so that the world may know..." John 17:23

The past month at the Pavilion has been a whirlwind of continued God-sightings. One of the main highlights was our fourth annual Fall Fest event. The Pavilion and Tabernacle were filled with youth and adult Westsiders, as well as other friends and family. This event always provides a colliding of worlds as people that don't live on the West Side surround our West Side friends, and many are welcomed to a neighborhood that may not be like their own. In the past two years that I have been a part of this event, I have witnessed the Spirit of the Lord provide immense joy and unity among those that attend.

This year the Lord generously provided us with everything we needed for this event, almost free of charge. With donations of a four-foot tall octopus piñata, donuts, pies, cider, and other refreshments, as well as two large boxes of handpicked apples, the Lord revealed His excellencies for this event. We also had the privilege of having four local bands share their musical gifts, while many of the attendees listened with expressions of joy and delight.

We're also witnessing unity take place as volunteers, college-aged and middle-aged, serve at the coffee shop. It's evident that God's heart loves when His people, no matter their age, educational background, or length of time being a Christian, join together to serve the broken and the poor.

So, we continue to praise God for His abundance and His excellencies being presented in our midst.

To Him be the Glory.

Lindsay Sisson

P.S. Thank you to all who donated candy, cider, or other refreshments for the Fall Fest. You are all such a blessing!



FALL FEST!

YOUTH DISCIPLESHIP TEAM UPDATE

The changing leaves and falling temperatures don't seem to be effecting the Youth Discipleship Team much these days. We have been busy envisioning BSHOP being inundated with high school students with Weekends@BSHOP this spring and Immersion this summer. The hard work of designing logos, building curriculum, scheduling groups, and putting leaders in place is stirring up a deep sense of anticipation for what God is going to do this year. While we are currently surrounded by many young people who are lost and wandering without Christ, our team has been having dreams and visions of these young people filling the park with worship or studying scripture under the 100 year-old oak trees. There will be waves of young people flooding the streets of the West Side all year round starting this spring, so now we are simply being faithful in this season of preparation, knowing that tomorrow God will do great wonders among us (Joshua 3:5).

Our Saturday Night Worship gatherings are continuing to raise up and exhort this generation to a life of true discipleship. This month, we are focusing our teaching and prayer on God's heart for the poor. If you've never been, come join us in worship and prayer at the Tabernacle. We meet every Saturday at 7pm.

Derek Sterenberg

Thank you for praying. Here are some things you can be praying for.

- Pray for grace and wisdom as we steward these ministries.
- Pray for BSHOP staff as we move forward with ministry.
- Pray for grace over our community life.
- Pray for protection of our minds, bodies, and hearts.
- Pray for our neighbors and our relationships with them and for real transformation in our neighborhood.

The Pavilion @ 1056 Bridge is open from noon - 5 pm Monday - Friday

Our Saturday Evening Worship Gatherings begin at 7 pm every Saturday in the Tabernacle @ 1054 Bridge