

FAQs

New Life Church of God & Grace Gathering Central



1. Are New Life Church of God and Grace Gathering Central merging into one church?

Not exactly. Even though we hope it feels like one family, we will still maintain the two distinct churches. The reason why we are integrating the two churches more closely is because God has made it clear to Steve and Stephanie Terry, as well as many people from both churches, that we are better together. We have been called to the same mission field together, we are all brothers and sister of the same family, and we can build that unity in even greater ways as we worship together every Sunday.

3. Is “New Grace” our new name?

We actually don't officially have a new name. We are still New Life and Grace Gathering Central, but “New Grace” is kind of an easy shorthand that acknowledges both. When new people come, we can welcome them to “New Grace.” This gives us an easy way to refer to both congregations. At the same time, we know that new people will not necessarily be linked to one church more than the other but will be a part of this combined, “New Grace” family.

4. How does the financing work, and how do new attenders financially give?

Current givers at both churches will continue to give in the same way they already do. However, when a new person comes to the gathering and hasn't been an attender of either congregation before, they can give to either church because all new giving will be split 50/50 between both churches. Therefore, once a quarter, both churches will determine any new givers and make sure it is split evenly. To make this even easier, both churches have an option on their online giving platform for new attenders to give to “New Grace” which will be then split 50/50.

4. What is the purpose of the Oxford Dream Center and who is leading it?

The New Life overseers and Grace Gathering overseers have developed a new non-profit together to oversee any new facilities built and will be the outreach arm of both churches into the Oxford Community. This board is made up of four elders from New Life and four elders from Grace, along with Steve Terry who leads both congregations and who will chair this board. You can learn more about our vision for a family training center at gracegathering.com/ftsoo.

6. Who is leading each of the ministries and how are we integrating the two churches?

Because we are two churches trying to operate as one family, we don't want to have two different teams running ministries but have them lead teams together.

Here are the leaders of the various ministries:

- **Prayer Ministry:** Alan Ganaway, Matt Haberman
- **Tech:** Zach VanHuisen, Donna Masterson
- **Worship:** AJ Walz, Lois Dada, Adam Jones
- **Connections:** Casi Stilwell, LaKeesha Ganaway
- **Service Leaders:** Stephanie Terry, Alan Ganaway, Suze Fair
- **Service Coordinators:** Sandy VanHuisen, Julia Green
- **Spanish Ministry:** Dan Brusco, Homer Garcia
- **Facilities/Security Management:** TJ Smith, Andy Watkins
- **Children's Ministry:** Yasmin Garcia
- **Youth:** Donna Masterson

7. How will we integrate other events and settings outside of Sunday services?

Relationships are best developed outside the four walls of the church building around a dinner table, serving in the community, or rubbing shoulders in prayer, small groups, and outreach events. Soccer Thursdays are one great example of serving on mission together, but integration will continue to develop in many other settings.

8. How will ministry budgeting and internal/external benevolence work?

Budget monies will be shared among both churches. This will be regularly monitored and evaluated. BounceBack is the non-profit ministry we utilize to help families internally within our churches weather unexpected financial crises, and Inasmuch is the non-profit ministry we utilize to help anyone externally outside of the church.

9. What will the worship ministry look like?

While an integrated worship style is the goal, this will take time. We don't want to force a timing on this but let it happen naturally. Therefore, once a month we will have both worship teams lead together, and then the other Sundays we will rotate New Life worship team leading and Grace Central team leading. We imagine over time the integration and partnership between the two will grow.

10. What challenges will this integration face?

We are not unaware of the racial tensions in our culture, the unfair treatment of black people at the hands of many white people historically in our country, and how the church has not been the beacon of light in these areas as it should have been. While we desire to see unity in the church and Christ-centered love, we understand the reality that we are not pursuing this in a vacuum. There are historical realities, strongholds, and principalities that will work against our vision and our unity. However, no weapon formed against us will stand!

11. How will this integration be a prophetic witness of God's heart?

We believe God has called us together as black, white, and brown people in Christ to be a prophetic witness to believers in the Church overall, to unbelievers in the city, and to the world as a reflection of God's heart. We believe that our unity, our love for one another, our willingness to take responsibility when we wrong someone, our willingness to forgive one another, our willingness to believe the best motives of our brothers and sisters, our willingness to persevere, to not give up, and to fight the good fight will be the mantra of God's calling to us. And we will not give up until we are all worshipping at the throne in the New Heaven and Earth!

"After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb." (Rev. 7:9)

