



GOD'S GRACE PORTLAND & YOU

GRACE

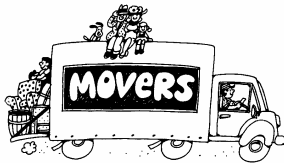
God's grace continues to be a wonder! Because of his grace in providing each of you, we have reached the level of support necessary to move! Our plan is to drive out of St. Louis on Thursday, May 5th – two short weeks from now.

It has truly been amazing to see the way that God works in us, in the hearts of many, and throughout all the circumstances of life to provide. Even as we have struggled at times with our lack of control (things didn't always happen when or how we wanted), we are floored by the way that God has worked so wondrously on his behalf.

PORTLAND

As we prepare to move, we allow ourselves to think of what we are leaving and what we are moving to.

We leave our house in St. Louis for an apartment in Portland. We leave our home for the past 6½ years for a home we have never actually seen. We leave the Midwest, land of open plains and the mighty Mississippi for the Northeast, land of gorgeous coastline on the Atlantic Ocean (Maine has 3,500 miles of coast). We leave a land of beef and barbecue for a land of seafood and lobster (Beth is especially excited about this one – Per on the other hand am moving the wrong direction here). We leave a land of early spring for a land of cool summer nights.



Most of all, we leave a land filled with friends and family – those people whom God has given us over the past nine years in St. Louis to be our family where we have nobody related to us. We leave a Christian family, Memorial Presbyterian Church, that has watched over us and challenged us to grow personally, as a family (all three boys were born into that family), and as leaders of the church. We leave all this here in St. Louis, but not behind us – even as we look forward to all that God has prepared for us in Portland.

You

Words can not express our feelings for each and every one of you for the way in which God is using you in our lives. Paul in writing a letter much like this one (to his supporters in Philippians) expresses his feelings in this situation for us (under *Our Feelings* to the right).

Thanks to you we have reached the necessary level of support to allow us to move – for which we are extremely excited! However, this is a minimal level of support for us. We still need about an additional 15% (~\$15,000) in order to be fully funded and able to focus exclusively on the work of strengthening the church and reaching out to bring Christ and his healing to the people of Portland. If you have not yet pledged, we ask that you would now so we can turn our attention fully to the work in Portland. If you have pledged and have not yet begun sending your monthly or quarterly checks, we need you to start now.

Our Feelings...

I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.

Philippians 1:3-7

Our Apartment...



Our apartment seen from space...

APRIL 2005

Instructions for gifts and pledges

Checks should be made out to *Christ the Redeemer* and sent to:

Christ the Redeemer
33 Oversight Road
Portland, ME 04103



OUR PARTNERS, THE CHALLENGE & FAITH

OUR PARTNERS

God has done so much, join us in praising God for:

- The many who have already responded to the call to join with us, allowing us to move in two short weeks!
- The wonders of his grace to us throughout this time. As we celebrate this milestone, we are exquisitely aware of his grace to us throughout this entire time. May we (and you) always be so aware of how he loves us.
- The close friends here in St. Louis whom God has used as the instruments of his grace in personally carrying us through this time. From Shad Schoenke who so graciously designed our original prospectus and gave all our stuff the look that you see to Ken & Linda Morris who have come over to dinner many times to listen to us and then draw our minds to other things – and may all the rest of you who deserve mention forgive us for not being able to do so.

THE CHALLENGE

There is always more that we ask God to do, please pray specifically for:

- The move itself. For all that needs to be done to end this part of our life in St. Louis and to start over in Portland. For safety as we drive the 1500 miles that separates our homes.
- The people of Portland – that God would be preparing those who need to hear his message of grace. And for us as we begin to turn our lives towards these people; loving them with Christ.
- The continued growth of our team so that we have the resources to do more in reaching out. The provision of the additional money will allow us much greater flexibility in bringing Christ to the people of Portland.
- For Beth as she looks for a teaching job. Pray that God would provide added income while still allowing her to pursue her first callings as wife and mother.

FAITH

We have spoken many times (and continue to) of your being partners in this ministry. This isn't simply rhetoric designed to entice your money from you; Paul twice expresses this in his comments to the Philippians speaking of their "partnership in the Gospel from the first day to now." This is a partnership; you are active in this ministry in a very real way. This is your call to missions, to bringing the Gospel of Christ to the people of New England – you are going to make disciples of all men as Christ commanded.

But even more than that. You are not just partners with us, but partakers of grace with us. Throughout all that God is doing in and through us, you also partake of his grace. We want to encourage you that as you pray for us, as you read the stories of God's wonderful grace to us and the people of Portland, that you see yourselves where you are – as partakers of that grace with us. Rejoice in the wonder of God's grace being reminded of the breadth and depth of it all by the words of Amazing Grace to the right.

Amazing Grace

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my Shield and Portion be,
As long as life endures.

Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, Who called me here below,
Shall be forever mine.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.

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Our new address!

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