

## **A NOTE FROM THE CRAWFORDS:**

Dear GBC,

In Romans 1:12, Paul expresses his hope that by spending time with the Roman believers, “we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith, both yours and mine.” Paul knew that he absolutely needed the blessing of fellowship with the Roman Christians, and that his time spent among them would contribute greatly to his own growth in Christ.

When we think back on the years we have been privileged to spend at Grace Bible Church, we are filled with immense gratitude for all the blessings we have received through fellowship with you all. You have prayed for us, encouraged us, taught us, challenged us, served us, and cared for us since we arrived in the summer of 2017. We came that year, Steve having just finished his seminary degree, eager to serve in GBC’s youth ministry, but completely unaware just how much our lives would be changed for the better by you all. We are who we are today because of your godly impact on our lives.

We will never forget how you as a church have tangibly ministered to us through all the seasons of life... from helping us West Coast natives adjust to Midwest winters, to providing meals after the births of our three youngest kids here in Kansas, to caring for us when we experienced the passing of family members - you truly have been an extension of Christ’s love towards us.

Thank you for loving us so well in a manner which reflects our Savior’s love. Thank you to all the children’s ministry servants who have taught the Word of God so faithfully to our kids in Sunday school, in Kid’s Club, in VBS, and in LoveHutch. Thank you to those who have served alongside us in youth ministry, in GraceLife, and in a variety of other ministries. Thank you for countless meals, encouraging notes, and Christ-centered conversations over Wednesday night dinners. Thank you for being the iron which sharpens iron. Thank you for rejoicing with us when we have rejoiced and weeping with us when we have wept. Thank you for welcoming us and for loving us like family. Thank you for being one of the greatest blessings we could ever experience this side of heaven.

As we follow the Lord’s path for us to return to Southern California, we leave Kansas with profound gratitude for how He has blessed us through you all. We will miss you all very, very much, and we long for the day when we will reunite together around our Savior’s throne, never to part again. Until that glorious day, may we all be found faithful to “run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith...” (Hebrews 12:1-2)

With love in Christ for you all,

Steve, Anna, Elijah, Abby, Jo, Caleb, & Benji Crawford