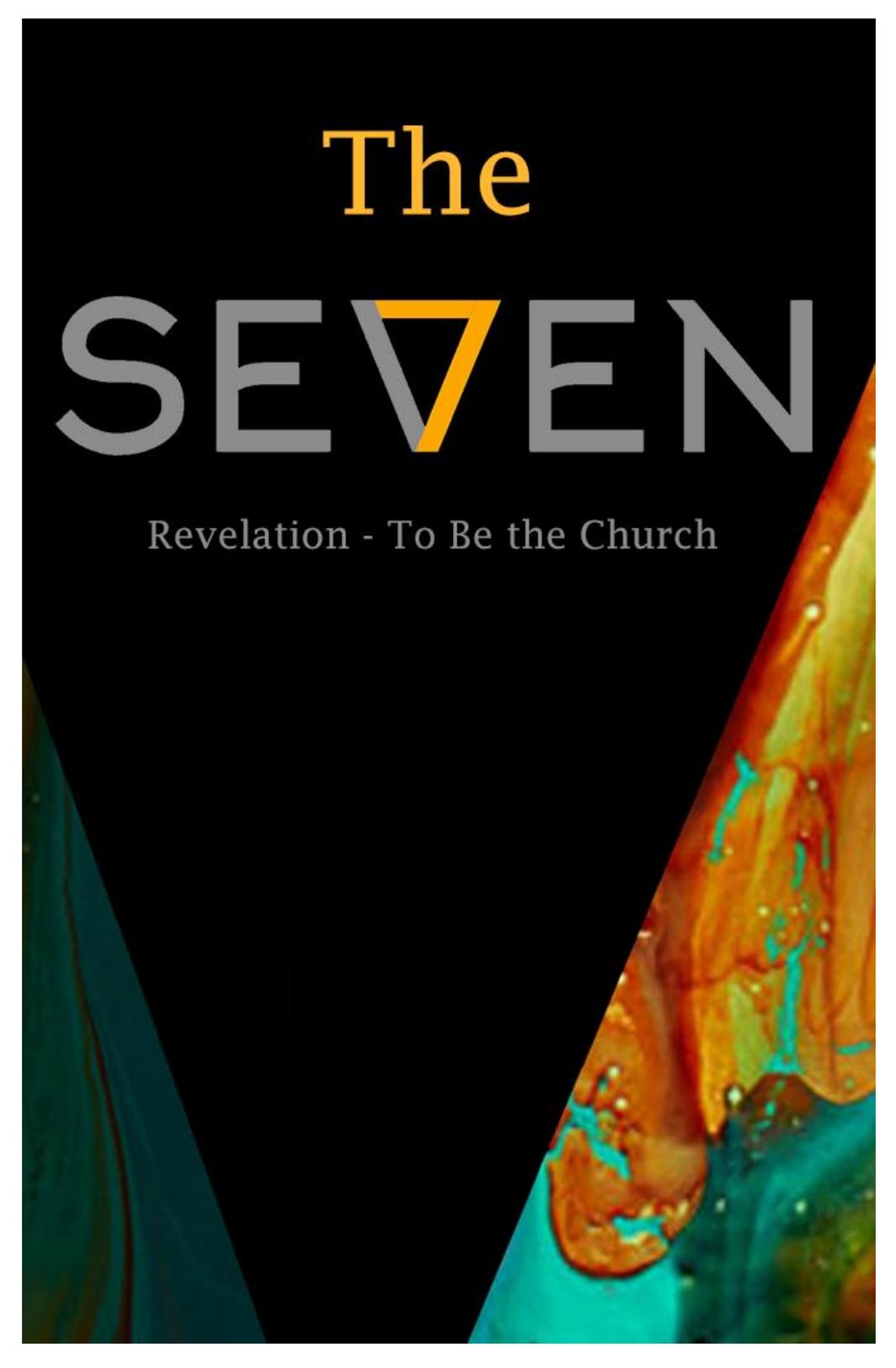


The

SEVEN

Revelation - To Be the Church



WELCOME TO GRACE UNION

WHAT'S HAPPENING TODAY
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2017

- ➔ Praise & Worship
- ➔ Welcome/Announcements
- ➔ Offering
- ➔ Message: Pastor Bob Poley
- ➔ Water Baptisms



Thank you for joining us today! If this is your first time with us, please stop by the Welcome table in the lobby for a free gift. We'd love to meet you.

NEWS & EVENTS



Please stay with us after service as we celebrate with those who are getting baptized!

ELEMENTARY CHRISTMAS REHEARSALS - TODAY

Practices for the Christmas Play are held EACH SUNDAY right after service. Pick-up is at 1 p.m. We will provide light snacks. If you have any questions, please contact Mindy Adams at mindyadams82@gmail.com.

GU SMALL GROUPS

We hope you'll come back Wednesday evening where we have programs for all ages! The doors are open at 4 p.m. for Drive-by-Prayer in the Auditorium, followed by our kids Awana program, GU Students and men's and women's Bible studies at 6:30. Please pick up a brochure in the lobby so you can get connected with a group.



food truck and **MOVIE NIGHT**

6 pm Food Truck/Car decorating
7 pm Movie begins

IT'S ON.
SEPT 29



We are so excited for our first FOOD TRUCK & MOVIE NIGHT out on the lawn THIS FRIDAY! Bring your lawn chairs and blankets to watch the *The Lego Batman Movie*. Kids bring a large box for your "car," and we'll provide the craft supplies! See Crystal Myers today for more information, or if you can help with this event!

GU STUDENTS - UPCOMING EVENTS

9/30 - STAR WARS MARATHON - 8 am

10/6-7 - Youth Lock-in at Epic 6 (sign up in the Lobby)

11/17-18 - SMYM Youth Convention at James River



BAGS *by the*
BUMPER

October 1 for Feed My People

NEXT SUNDAY, we'll be collecting non-perishable food and hygiene items for Feed My People. Place the bags by your bumper when you arrive for service, and we'll pick them up!



TRUNK
OR
TREAT

SIGN UP TODAY!

OCT 28 4-6PM

OUR MISSION

We are helping people to live in union with Christ by grace.

- Union with God through a relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Union with Others through investing in people through Biblical community.
- Union with Ourselves with a wholeness found in a new identity in Christ.
- Union with our Broken World by being an agent of change in our society by caring for and serving those who are poor, oppressed or marginalized.

We value sharing the love, life and power of God to our communities and world, joining Christ in his mission to rescue fallen humanity.

WAYS TO CONNECT



For any special needs, please email our Prayer Team at gucprayer@gmail.com.

WAYS TO GIVE



ENVELOPE

Offering or Giving Box



TEXT TO GIVE

Text GIVE to 314.888.5188



ONLINE

graceunionstl.org

MAILING ADDRESS

3900 Union Road, St. Louis, MO 63125

Visit us online to learn more about Grace Union at graceunionstl.org.

All of our message recordings can also be found on our website.



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THE SEVEN (PART 2): *Smyrna*

I. Background on Smyrna:

A. Smyrna was Fiercely Roman.

- A stronger Rome meant a more prosperous Smyrna.

Revelation 2:8-11

- 8 To the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again.
- 9 I know your afflictions and your poverty—yet you are rich! I know about the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.
- 10 Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor's crown.
- 11 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death.

B. The church at Smyrna was suffering intense persecution and poverty.

- Refusal to participate in Pagan or Emperor worship singled the Christians out for public disdain and abuse.
- You were required to offer incense to Caesar at the entrance to the marketplace and they actually gave you a mark or a certificate giving you the right to do business in the marketplace.
 - So the Christians were not able to buy or sell in the market place.
- Things were bad and getting worse and the Christians in Smyrna were Afraid.

II. The central message in the letter to Smyrna was “Do not be afraid.”

A. Fear can cripple us and rob us of the Joy and Peace God intends for us.

- The things that might happen to them were not the real risk, being controlled by fear was the risk.

- Fear can cause us to pre-experience and re-experience circumstances, profoundly compounding their impact on our lives.

Philippians 4:4-7

- 4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!
- 5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.
- 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.
- 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

B. Fear is caused by having our eyes in the wrong place.

- Fear is caused by focusing our attention on our opposition rather than our Advocate.

III. Point: When our eyes are fixed on who Jesus really is and the reality of what he has done, it takes the teeth out of fear.

A. The worst thing anybody can do to you is kill your body, but Jesus has already promised you Resurrection to Eternal life.

B. In comparison to the Final Victory and Eternal Reward promised, even the worst that could happen in this life disappears in comparison to Eternity.

- Circumstance and people don't REALLY have any power of you.
 - These circumstances are utterly insignificant in comparison to ALL OF ETERNITY and what awaits us on the other side of the veil.

C. The real point of what Jesus accomplished is Eternity, not this temporary world.

- God's promise is that our deferred blessing more than makes up for whatever we missed out on now.
- I love how he says it in the letter, "I know your poverty and your afflictions, yet YOU ARE RICH."
 - Jesus is saying, if you could only see what you have amassed on "this side."

- D. When it comes to fear and the misery that can result, perspective is everything.
- The right perspective changes the way in which we experience our circumstances.
- E. Jesus was helping the church become deliberate about who and what could call a code red in their lives.
- In so doing they could live with a level of PEACE and HOPE that transcends human understanding.
- F. Our circumstances are not really the same as those in Smyrna, but Fear still works the same; it preys upon whatever we allow it to.
- But Jesus words to us today are the same as they were to Smyrna, Do not be afraid!
 - He is the first and the last.
 - Circumstances don't have the control they seem to, God is ultimately sovereign.

IV. Final thoughts

- A. We will struggle to have peace when circumstances stink if we think it is our job to bring justice.
- God didn't ask them to OVERCOME he asked them to be FAITHFUL until HE overcame.
- B. Circumstances could only test them for a limited time, but their reward would be Unending and Decisive.
- In the end the church would be the last man standing.
 - 300 years after this letter was written the ROMAN EMPIRE CRUMBLED and fell.
 - Many of the 160,000 Christians living in Turkey today live in Izmir (modern day Smyrna).
 - Many of these Christians can trace an UNBROKEN LINEAGE all the way back to the Church of Smyrna that this letter went out to.
 - **Their enemies are NO MORE, and the church still stands there more numerous and powerful than ever.**

THIS WEEK

Visit us online for information about these events and more.
graceunionsil.org or facebook.com/graceunionsil

MONDAY (9/25)

Alcoholics Anonymous (GU Family Room) - 7 pm
(Led by Jeff Hall - 314.620.6635)

TUESDAY (9/26)

WEDNESDAY (9/27)

Drive-by-Prayer (Main Aud.) - 4-6:30 pm
Wednesday Night Ministries - 6:30 pm
Ladies Bible Study (Conf. Room A)
Adult Bible Study (Conf. Room B)
Men's Group Study (Conf. Room C)
GU Kids Awana (Nursery-5th grade)
GU Students (Youth Auditorium) - 6:30 pm

THURSDAY (9/28)

FRIDAY (9/29)

FOOD TRUCK & MOVIE NIGHT - 6 pm

SATURDAY (9/30)

GU Students "Star Wars" Marathon

SUNDAY (10/1)

BAGS BY THE BUMPER FOOD DRIVE

GU Small Groups - 9 am
Women's Group (Conf. Room B)
Men's Group (Conf. Room C)
Couples/Parenting (Cox home) - 5 pm

Adults/Students Service (Main Aud.) - 10 am
GU Kids (Early Childhood-Elementary) - 10 am

Elementary Christmas Rehearsals

SAVE THE DATES

10/6-7 - Youth Lock-in

10/28 - Trunk or Treat

10/8,15,22 - Kids Play Practice

11/17-18 - Youth Conference

OUR STAFF IS HERE TO SERVE YOU

OFFICE: 314.892.2757

PRAYER: GUCPRAYER@GMAIL.COM

- **Rev. Bob Poley, Lead Pastor**
bobpoley78@gmail.com
- **Rev. Jason Myers, Associate Pastor**
jscott5157@gmail.com
- **Patrick Daniels, Student Ministry Pastor**
patrickdaniels1137@gmail.com
- **Carrie Indelicato, Worship Leader**
cindelicato@live.com
- **Crystal Myers, Early Childhood Director**
crystaldawnmyers@gmail.com
- **Carrie Clifton, Publications & Media**
lcclifton@aol.com