

# METROGRACE

Developing Urban Churches

**February 2019**

**MetroGrace is developing gospel-centered, community-based churches with Crossroads Community Church of Philadelphia in the neighborhoods of Holmesburg, Wissinoming and Bridesburg.**

## Holmesburg

Recently a young family began attending worship services at Crossroads Holmesburg. Alexander and Amberly discovered the Crossroads website, liked what they read and decided to visit. Their older son, Noah, was welcomed into the Kingdom Kids program. And Amberly decided to keep their infant son, Joshua, with her in the auditorium. After that first service, Alexander said that Crossroads was exactly the kind of church they needed. He was excited about the verse-by-verse teaching that he heard from the pulpit. He enjoyed the Christ-centered worship music. And he was glad that Noah was able to learn in an age-appropriate environment. Soon, they asked to dedicate Joshua to the Lord. They invited family members who heard the gospel and enjoyed their worship experience. Please pray for this young family and others who need the stability of a growing church family.



Kingdom Kids is the weekly education program for children at Crossroads Holmesburg. We're thankful for stable families seeking to raise their children in the fear and admonition of the Lord. We're grateful, too, to serve families where children experience less stability. Recently, a child asked for prayer because her mother was arrested, having thrown her older sister through a window. The two girls are being cared for by the mother's boyfriend who continues to attend church. Please pray for these children and others who experience trauma that no child should have to face. Please pray, too, for more workers. Those serving children

and their families carry a heavy burden. More urban workers are needed to share the weight of ministry.

## Bridesburg

Pat is a single woman in her sixties. She has been attending Worship, LifeGroup and Bible Babes at Crossroads Bridesburg. Recently, she commented about how glad she was that Crossroads moved into the neighborhood. "People around here really need this kind of ministry," she said. While noting the needs of her neighbors, it's clear that Pat longs for a church family. Failed marriages have left

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Dr. Jim Brown,  
Executive Director**

her feeling lonely. Her adult children rarely visit, so she feels abandoned. She misses her grandchildren. Her disability income supplemented by a part-time job as a bus monitor barely provides enough income to survive. Please pray that Pat and others in Bridesburg would experience the love of Christ at Crossroads. Pray that many would trust Jesus for salvation, grow in their relationship with Him, gather with neighbors to worship and share the love they've received. Please pray, too, for an urban church planter or intern who can lead the developing group in Bridesburg.

## Wissinoming

Church Planters Pete and Danielle Forshtay are blessed with good news to share!



Pete and Danielle Forshtay

"When I was a teen attending Grace Community Church of Fremont, Ohio, formerly Grace Brethren Church, I attended Momentum youth conference, formerly BNYC, in 1998 where I met Danielle. We became pen pals and fell in love with each other through many years of letter writing from Fremont, Ohio to Philadelphia, PA.

After the terrorist attacks on 9-11, I joined the Marines as a rifleman, and following extensive training was deployed to Afghanistan in 2004. Witnessing the fragility and brevity of life firsthand, I decided to get started with mine by asking my pen pal from Philly to marry me upon my return. We were married in May of 2005, just prior to my Iraqi mission. We spend the first year of our marriage apart, but were back in our element, writing each other. Finishing out my four year contract in the USMC in December of 2006, I moved to Philly to be with my bride.

Intending to move to Columbus, Ohio, we were unable to secure work or a home loan, and though packed, we were grounded in Philly. So we prayed for jobs and the Lord promptly provided for us both. We also committed ourselves to serving at Grace Community Bible Church, formerly First Grace Brethren Church, under the leadership of Pastor Shawn Kidder. At around the same time, we were invited to check out a para-church children's ministry in Wissinoming called Comly Street Chapel where we ministered the gospel on Monday nights.

During that season of life, I was challenged by Dr. Jim Brown of MetroGrace to attend Cairn University, formerly Philadelphia Biblical University, formerly Philadelphia College of Bible, and begin a church planting internship. During my education, Danielle and I felt the Lord calling us to buy a home and live in Wissinoming, Philadelphia and commit ourselves to that ministry and to the reestablishment of a church in that community. So after being sent by Grace Community, we opened Crossroads Community Church of Wissinoming in October of 2012.

I graduated from Cairn University in the spring of 2013, at which time Danielle and I planned to start a family. It seemed to us to be the perfect time with the church plant started, school passed, internship completed, house purchased, jobs secured... but nothing happened. We began to pray earnestly that the Lord would bless us with children, but after many months, nothing still. We asked others to pray and began seeking consult from doctors. They shared with us crushing news but also a path forward. So we began praying for healing as well as for children, asking others to continue faithfully praying. There were many years of no results, no news, no improvements, and what began to feel like, no hope. But we continued praying, and so did many others.

Finally, in October of 2018, we received our first ever, after thirteen years of marriage and after five years of intentional effort and fervent prayer, positive pregnancy test! I am thrilled to share that Danielle is pregnant, and that come July of 2019, we will be a family of three, formerly two.

Thank you all for your continued prayer for us and for our family as we serve the Lord in Philly. And if you're able, come help! We'll need it now more than ever!"

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