



GRACE HAVEN

Biblical Renewal Ministries, Inc.

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Ah, the refreshment of that first warm...spring rain

Written by Garrett Martin

Thank You

to the individuals who matched gifts given to the ministry, totaling up to \$10,000. These funds will be used to pay off the remaining debt of the renovation project. We received \$31,986 which includes the matching grant!

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Would you like to help encourage the hearts of your community? You can do so by joining our *Partnership Program*. Our partners commit to supporting our work with a recurring monthly donation of \$10 or more via their credit card or debit card. To partner with us or to learn more, check out our *Partnership* page on our website.



Out of the lonely death of winter arises new life. With each spring, a new purpose and vision. With each summer, new growth and maturity. With each fall, a new harvest and abundance of the seeds sown so long ago. This we call the cycle of life. A similar cycle of life is found in the human experience. All of us face changes in our lives - moving into a new community, a new job, death of a loved one. Change is difficult at best, life-crushing at worst, and always carrying a potential for new life.

February 2018 - Audrey and I found ourselves sitting in the back row of a conference, tears streaming down our faces as the speaker spoke of the waiting period found in the winter of life. He spoke of a specific winter time in the Christian church, a time where Jesus did not meet his follower's expectations. The speaker encouraged us to follow the command of Jesus Christ found in Acts 1:4 "wait for the promise" that God had given. We were in an Artic Circle period of life, a time of life that Peter Scazzerro in his book, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, has characterized as "The Wall." The Wall, Peter suggests, is a season in our lives when God does not make sense. A time when everything you thought you knew about God and his purpose for your life takes a surprising turn into the cold chill of the north wind. Suddenly, you are standing in the Artic Circle and told to wait. As the 30-mph sub-zero wind beats against your back, it does not take long for the fingers of death to begin to wrap around your heart as the chill drives deeper and deeper into your

very soul. As our hearts quaked with grief and disillusionment, the speaker directed us to Hebrews 6:15 "And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise." Did we dare to hope for another spring? Being at the foot of "The Wall" pushed us into a journey to discovering the heart of God in a fresh and new way. One of the many things we learned along this journey is that God can take the turmoil of unexpected change and replace it with an unexplainable quietness. At first, that quietness is loudly filled with our own grief; but as grief begins to wane, sweet peace and rest begins to overtake the most confused of heart.

July 2018 - By this time Audrey and I had found deep healing and peace in waiting. How long must we wait...1 year, 5 years, 10 years? We did not know. Yet in our daily choice to rest in a God who we were struggling to understand, we found a strange sense of release. In our weakness, we began to find strength. Strength to hope again, strength to dream again. I wonder what God has in mind.....?

As we were leaving a coffee shop meeting with friends on a warm July night, I felt my wife's hand urgently grasp onto my arm. "God is getting ready to move. I can just sense it," she whispered into my ear so that our friends could not hear. As we drove home that evening, Audrey shared with me how in that meeting she began to sense that we need to begin to prepare for a move of God. Immediately my senses were alert. What could it be? Fear soon followed. What if we were disappointed once again? I could not bear, to once again, face the

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emotions that had characterized the past several years. I was too tired. So once again we choose to trust and wait.

Several weeks later, on a bright, sunny August afternoon as I was operating our dozer on a Wetland restoration project, God began to speak to my heart. "I am calling you to Grace Haven." It seemed that the world stood still. For the rest of the afternoon, God began to gently move my heart as He began to reveal this new direction in our lives. "By the way, I need you to be ready by the first of the year." We would need to sell the drainage and excavation business that I owned with my father. This would be a big change, a permanent change, a life change. Did we dare to trust again?

I knew that Grace Haven already had three counselors and I was pretty sure they were not prepared for a fourth one. Audrey and I spent several weeks praying for confirmation and then I picked up my phone and sent Mel Eash a text message. Mel responded a short time later, "Looks like we know what to pray for." Several days later I received a text from Mel, "Menno Yoder has just announced his retirement effective the first of the year." The moment was surreal. God is moving?! He still has a plan, a purpose? Hope was reborn. Maybe I can dare to trust again?



Garrett & Audrey Martin
Jonathon Kaden Andre'
Kailey

The next several weeks and months had a struggle of their own. Times of grief, times of expectant hope, and times of frustration. The enemy gave opportunity to become discouraged at every turn, yet God worked it out according to his timing. On January 8th, I sat behind a desk in the Grace Haven offices for the first time. Spring had sprung. A new summer ahead, a harvest yet unseen. Perhaps another winter presenting another opportunity to rest and trust. Do I dare to trust?

Welcome

We feel very blessed to have Henry Miller join the Executive Board! He and his wife, Edna, have been married for thirty-nine years and have six adult children. They live in Shipshewana, Indiana and are a part of the New Order Christian Fellowship. He is part owner of Mr. Wrench Repair Services. In 2011, they found healing from painful events that deeply affected their family. Because of this, they are passionate about seeing others experience freedom in their lives. Please pray for him as he fills this role!



**Henry & Edna
Miller**

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