

The Graumans *in* South LA

Dear friends,

Our Family has moved to South Central LA! That's not Louisiana. It is inner-city Los Angeles, sometimes affectionately referred to as "the hood". We are loving it! God has been working in our hearts, and we wanted to share some of these joys and struggles with you so that we could be all be encouraged by each other's prayers and faith.



Josh just finished preparing an Old Testament curriculum for Eternity Bible College which he has been teaching through, and this passage from Lamentations 3 is an encouragement and challenge to us:

I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me. Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of Yahweh's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.

The last couple of years have been really hard for us in a lot of ways, but we've also seen the faithfulness and strength of the Lord in ways that we never expected... making them very joyful years too!

Almost three years ago, we took in a homeless family for three weeks and over time continued to love, counsel, and challenge them with the gospel. Ultimately, the parents chose some sinful habits resulting in their children entering foster care and us being asked to take them. Overnight, we went from having two girls to having 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 year olds (plus a 12 year old sister for a while)! God provided daily strength that was abnormal for us, but also worked a radical change in those little lives as they learned the goodness of Christ and starting trusting Him. Social workers were constantly amazed at the transformation, and we believe God was glorified as we repeatedly got to share His adopting love as the reason for our love for these kids.

As the change in the kids became apparent, the mom became jealous and started making many false accusations about us. We had police and social workers constantly making surprise visits and interviewing the kids. We felt helpless but saw that our God is not: in everything, He faithfully protected us and our children, and never allowed us to be "consumed". At one point DCFS removed our foster kids, but the judge ordered them back with a "Do Not Remove" order... again we were reminded that "the king's heart is in the hand of the LORD" (Proverbs 21:1)!

Then November 2011, the judge unexpectedly (against the county's recommendation) sent the kids back to their parents. We miss them terribly, but all the answered prayers made it so clear to us that God was in control and this was His doing. They will forever be a part of our family consciousness and we will always be praying that the seeds planted will take root and grow with fruit into eternity.

**I say to myself, “Yahweh is my portion; therefore I will wait for him.”
Yahweh is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks Him;
it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of Yahweh.**

As we’ve experienced the pain of this broken world, we also have experienced the joy of waiting on our Savior—when He returns, sin will be gone and all things will be made right! He is better than anything this world offers, and we’ve been moved to share Him with those who are lacking hope. After praying about going overseas, our hearts kept going back to a new church plant in south Los Angeles that our friends were starting. Their desire to reach out with the hope of the gospel and their vision for compassionate care matched how God had been working in our hearts.

So here we are! We are a part of a great team with four families and some single ladies. God has been moving in amazing ways. He provided a huge open door at the local elementary school. For two months we were able to have a kids club with 150 kids singing to and learning about God during school hours at a public school! We also had our first church service there on Easter. Please pray that we would continue to be able to build into the children and families we have been reaching out to at the school and that lives will be transformed by the power of the gospel!



We are also excited to be offering a four week parenting class coming up on April 24th that we hope to offer periodically. We have gotten involved in the local crisis pregnancy center and started to mentor people that come asking for help. After walking one couple through a curriculum we have been developing, we're ready to offer it at a wider level. Pray that God would bring the parents He wants to come and that we can care for and build relationships with them. Other prayer requests include:

- Pray that God would establish Family Gatherings/Bible Studies with people He is calling
- Pray that God would allow us to care for kids through our Kids Program this summer
- Pray for wisdom for our team to consider where to invest our time and energies
- Pray for a visible Spirit empowered love amongst our team and for our community

Love in Christ,

Josh, Melody, Nadiya & Naomi



Learn more!

Email: josh@grauman.com / melody@grauman.com

Our Website: grauman.com/josh

Church Website: cornerstonesouthla.com

Facebook: facebook.com/CornerstoneSouthLA

Financial Partnership: grauman.com/support
(select Josh Grauman from the drop down menu)

Prayerfully consider if you would like to come help for a week in our summer program, or join us for a longer term internship!