

Welcome to Kelley and Jola Johnson

Kelley is currently taking a 1-year sabbatical from his 24 year career in law enforcement. He left his position as a Deputy Sheriff with Renville County in January to participate in a pastoral internship under the mentoring eyes of Pastor Jeff Brown of Grace Community Church in Olivia, MN. This internship is a half-time position with Kelley assisting Jeff in the areas of leadership training, discipleship, small group ministries, and occasional preaching. This internship will also provide Kelley with practical pastoral experience to deepen his understanding of the demands placed on those in ministry so he can serve them better. Kelley is also using this internship to explore his gifts and a possible permanent shift into fulltime ministry. “In the past year the Lord has made it very clear to us that it is time to step out of the boat in faith and start walking on the water.” says Kelley, referencing Matthew 14 and Peter’s water-walking experience.

The other half of the internship is committed to serving the NCD in the Pastoral Care Assistant role. In the NCD position, Kelley and Jola will continue to assist with the Sabbath Rest retreats while building relationships with pastors and their families. Kelley and Jola both have many years experience in caring for those in fulltime ministry. They will be working with the NCD Friends of Pastors Network, attending regional Cluster meetings, working in the area of accountability with the Pastoral Care Point Persons across the district. Kelley also hopes to explore opportunities to work with and train leadership boards in the area of promoting pastoral care within their local congregations and in caring for their own pastor, a principle Kelley calls “shepherding the shepherd.”

Kelley is currently serving as an elder, small group leader, and worship team member with Grace Community Church. He has four years of previous elder experience with another body of believers, and has served in many roles within his church experience. Kelley holds degrees in law enforcement and sociology from the University of Minnesota, Duluth, a Certificate of Biblical Survey Studies: Old and New Testament Survey from Village School of the Bible, and a Master’s Degree in Ministry Leadership from Crown College.

Jola shares a heart of compassion for those in fulltime ministry and a willingness to serve them. She currently serves as deaconess and the director of communications at Grace Community Church, is a member of the worship team, and the monthly prayer vigil team. Her duties include answering the office phone and relaying messages to Pastor Jeff and/or the appropriate leadership team member, producing the weekly worship bulletin and sermon notes for the body, other assorted office tasks, and assisting Kelley the leadership of their small group ministry at Grace. At home, Jola has the wonderful duty and responsibility of home schooling their two children, Sarah (16) and Isaac (12) while she manages the home and bakes some of the best bread in the world.

We ask that you pray for the Johnson’s as they leave a field they have worked for 24 years and expand a field the Lord has been moving them into for many years (Matthew 19:29). Anyone interested in joining the Johnson’s prayer and support team can contact them at jolakell@frontiernet.net.