

October 2023

# Garden Gleanings

A monthly publication of the Garden Community Church

## PRAYER RETREAT

A Prayer Retreat was held on Saturday, October 7 at the church. The day started with a light breakfast and was divided out into 5 different hours with a different prayer focus each hour, Children and Schools, Local Government, Church Demographics, Enemy Strategies and God's Harvest Field. The day ended with a short message from Pastor Craig. Below are several testimonies of participants throughout the day.



The prayer retreat was a very timely blessing and necessity. The evil that is going on in the world makes it easy to become overwhelmed but when we prayed corporately it was encouraging and helped refocus on God, who is in control no matter what is happening in the world.

-Simon Pyle



Prayer Retreat was a great time of meeting with God. It's another reminder that we serve a sovereign God and we partner with Him in seeing His will accomplished on earth through us who call Him Lord and Savior.

-Larry Friesen



Not only were we able to spend a day before our LORD in prayer for the needs of our communities and the church, but I was also blessed with the depth of love and wisdom shared by my prayer partners. There is so much strength in praying together.

-Sharon Smith

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Prayer Retreat Continued...

Although my time at the Prayer Retreat was limited to the 1<sup>st</sup> hour of prayer session, due to another commitment, I appreciated Nathania's inspiring opening and the opportunity to pray with Florene Goering and LaVerne Schmidt, for children. The Holy Spirit and hearing others pray prompted us to pray for a variety of children and their lives. "When two or three are gathered in my name, I am there in the midst of them." Matthew 18:20

-Larry Rose



I'm so thankful for the time we had to come together and pray for our community and our church. The work that went into it provided us all with an enlightening view of the places we live and how best to pray. Being able to pray by name for our leaders was also most helpful. We need to make this a regular part of the ministry of God's church at Garden!

-Pastor Craig

# BAPTISM

Following the morning worship service on October 8<sup>th</sup>, we had the privilege to hear Kylee Nelson's testimony about her walk with the Lord and her desire to take the next step in following Christ in water baptism.







The Wednesday evening **Garden Kids** ministry is off to a very good start!! There are 23 children in attendance. We have a good group of team teachers in three different age groups. All of them are doing an excellent job at engaging children with the Truth of the Bible. Lots of energy and enthusiasm is seen as children are actively learning Bible verses and new faith concepts. A great recreation staff is also working with our children in developing skill sets as well as team cooperation.

The evening begins with a well prepared and served meal. Erin Koehn along with her helpers, Wilda Baker and Eva Pankratz are a new added feature to our evening this year. This ministry to GK families as well as Prayer Gathering individuals has been very welcomed! A special thanks goes out to the Kitchen staff for their commitment to our Wednesday evening activities.

Keep an eye out for our Sunday morning PowerPoints as pictures of the various activities and age groups will be added from time to time. Pray for our staff and also our children. Pray that God will have the freedom to move and work in the lives of each participant involved in our Wednesday evening ministry. Pray that as the Gospel message is presented, hearts will recognize their individual need for a Savior.



# Library News

**OCTOBER IS CHURCH LIBRARY MONTH.** Many of you have enjoyed the Adult Library and have availed yourselves to the many different books and DVD's on our shelves. Some of you have used the room for quiet reflection. The conference table has become a very versatile piece of furniture which has been used for meetings as well as a place to set snacks and drinks. All of these activities are encouraged. The Library is a place of retreat and hopefully a place where all feel welcomed!

## **Some interesting facts you might find interesting . . .**

- \* Our **Adult Library** has around 2000 books
- \* Quarterly we purchase and add new books to our shelves. If you have an author or book suggestion, please let the librarian know!
- \* We have 5 different genres represented. These include Fiction, Biographies, Christian Living, Marriage & Family and Social issues.
- \* We have a section of 5 different Commentaries along with a variety of useful handbooks and reference materials. If you are teaching and need some Resources or Helps, please look on our Reference section to help you find answers.
- \* We have a large section of quality DVD's available for your viewing.
- \* The table set along the north window will always be a *quick look* at some of our current featured books. If looking through the shelves for a book seems overwhelming, stop by the table and pick up something that catches your eye. These book choices are changed out regularly.
- \* The check out table often will have a seasonal reading handout or other tools and resources for your use.
- \* During the month of August a deep cleaning of all the book shelves and updating of all our records were done. Every book was touched and evaluated before placing them back on the cleaned shelves. This is a big task but one that needs to be done yearly. We have our collections recorded on hard copy spread sheets as well as within our card file box. Leda Graybill is a big help in the work and also in creating the electronic pieces. This clean up and updating has also been done in the Children's Library.
- \* The **Children's Library** is the gathering place for our children! It is a happy place with a lot of activity. It is generally unsupervised and yet the children manage the activities and book check out very well. The older children help the younger kiddos with many of the table activities. This is healthy and great to observe! Many books are checked out on a weekly basis.
- \* The Children's Library usually has a monthly theme focus and the activities and books will reflect these themes.

The goal of the Library Team is to develop ongoing libraries that presents relevant materials that will nurture faith and Christian living. We continue to look for edifying and engaging books and resources.



# ADULT/CHILD PRAYER MINISTRY

## Alexis Klaassen—Aaron & Elisabeth Smith

Alexis—It is nice to know she is praying for me. She always stops by every Sunday to check in and ask me how she can pray for me. Just knowing someone is praying for me makes my week brighter!



## Colton Huxman—Dennis & Diane Morrison/Chad & Val Mason

Val—We have enjoyed having Colton's picture on our fridge as a daily reminder to pray for him and also his family. We pray that one day he would develop a personal relationship with the Lord.

## Jaxon Anaya—Leo & Sheryl Miller

Leo & Sheryl—It has been a delight to build a relationship with Jaxon. We speak openly to him about our prayers for him. We continue to look for ways to share the love and light of Jesus with him and ultimately pray, that Jesus will be his Savior.



## Matt Koehn—Larry & Dot Rowe/Karen Smithson (not pictured)

Larry & Dot—Knowing the importance of a youth being "train(ed) up in the way he should go," (Proverbs 22:6) we pray for Matthew Koehn.

Karen—I have enjoyed praying for Matt, just as I would pray for my grandchildren..







# Vonnie's Views

Recently I switched up my prayer plan and started using the familiar ACTS format: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, & Supplication. I printed the acronym on a single sheet which I fill out every Wednesday morning to pray for the coming week. Over the next few months, I will unpack a section of the ACTS format and share how it is helping me to pray in a more focused way. Last month I shared how I'm learning to adore God through my prayer time. This month I'll focus on confession.

What is confession? The dictionary defines it as: "a formal statement admitting that one is guilty of a crime; an admission or acknowledgment that one has done something that one is ashamed or embarrassed about." In court of law, evidence is laid out that shows the law was broken. Based on that evidence, the individual is found guilty or not guilty. Confession of sin is admission of guilt. When we confess our sin, we with God that we have broken God's law, and we stand guilty before Him.

How do we confess our sins to God? When we trusted Christ for our salvation, God imputed on us the righteousness of God. "For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ." (2 Corinthians 5:21) But, even though we are made right with God, we continue to sin. We sin by what we think, say, do, or fail to do. It seems best to immediately confess sin when we realize we have done wrong.

So, in my focused prayer time, what role does confession have if I'm not saving up the list of sins to confess to God? I have been praying through Psalm 51, David's Psalm of confession, one verse at a time. It is reminding me of how my sin offends our Holy God. It is reminding me of God's great compassion toward me. As I pray over the verses, I'm often reminded of ways in which I've sinned against God that I have glossed over or not remembered. I confess those when the Holy Spirit brings them to my attention.

Other passages I will pray through after I'm finished praying through Psalm 51 are Daniel 9:4-19, Ezra 9:6-15, and Nehemiah 9:5-36. Each of these biblical prayer confessions include:

- Testimony of God's character
- Acknowledgement of sin(s)
- Prayer for a humble, contrite heart
- Gratitude for assurance of forgiveness

It is a mistake to think that as we are spiritually, we will have less need to confess. The opposite is true. (Romans 7:13-25) The more mature we are in our faith, the more sensitive we become to the Holy Spirit's nudging regarding sin in our lives. We will gain an awareness of sin in areas we've never noticed before. And we confess it, repent, and grow in faith. Proverbs 28:13 "People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy."

Is important to know God's Word, so we know what is in opposition to God's holiness. "How can a young person stay pure? By obeying your word. I have tried hard to find you— don't let me wander from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you." Psalms 119:9-11

I John 1:9 assures us that when we confess our sins, our faithful God will forgive us and cleanse us. Confession restores closeness to God, brings healing where sin has brought brokenness, restores our joy, and make us usable to God.

Have mercy on me, O  
God,  
because of your  
unfailing love.  
Because of your great  
compassion,  
blot out the stain of  
my sins.  
Wash me clean from  
my guilt.  
Purify me from my sin.  
For I recognize my  
rebellion; it haunts me  
day and night.  
Against you, and you  
alone, have I sinned; I  
have done what is evil in  
your sight.  
You will be proved right  
in what you say, and  
your judgment against  
me is just.  
Psalm 51:1-4 NLT





## Prayer Calendar and Memory Verse

**Memory Verse: Psalm 103:1—Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His Holy Name.**

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
CALENDAR OF PRAISE AND HOPE -			<b>1</b> Wonderful Counselor - We can go to Him for wisdom & direction.	<b>2</b> Comforter - He is our comfort when we hurt.	<b>3</b> Strong Tower - We are safe in Him.	<b>4</b> Immanuel - God with us. We are never alone, not for a second.
<b>5</b> Almighty - More powerful than anything in this world.	<b>6</b> Provider - He will see that our needs are met, just like a loving father would.	<b>7</b> Hope - not a wish. A confident expectation that the promises are being kept.	<b>8</b> Refuge - Where I run when I feel small or afraid.	<b>9</b> Trustworthy - The One who I can trust to take care of the ones I love.	<b>10</b> Protector - He alone can defend me against the evil one.	<b>11</b> Shepherd - He prods me when I need prodding & carries me when I need carrying.
<b>12</b> Light - He shines forth in the darkness & overcomes the darkness.	<b>13</b> Most High God - Nothing surpasses Him, nothing is above Him.	<b>14</b> Creator - He knows me through and through because He made me.	<b>15</b> Guide - He directs my steps even when I don't know it, because He cares.	<b>16</b> Life - I have life only because of Him. He gave life, sustains life, gives me life with Him.	<b>17</b> Sovereign - He rules those that rule in this world. They accomplish His purposes.	<b>18</b> Cornerstone - A sure and steady rock that can't be shaken.
<b>19</b> Forgiving One - He alone forgives me of all my sins.	<b>20</b> Shield - He shelters and protects me from dangers I don't even see.	<b>21</b> Peace - The one who can calm my mind and my heart.	<b>22</b> Father - The one who has adopted me and taken full responsibility to care for me.	<b>23</b> Compassionate - He sees my tears and He acts.	<b>24</b> Healer - Whether it's temporary healing here, or permanent healing in glory, it's all Him.	<b>25</b> Restorer - He alone can restore what has been lost or stolen.
<b>26</b> Generous Giver - He gave us beauty and music and wonder to enjoy. None of them necessary.	<b>27</b> Hiding Place - A safe place, a quiet and secure place, a hallowed place.	<b>28</b> Approachable - Through Christ, we can come boldly to the throne of the Almighty & pour out our hearts.	<b>29</b> Redeemer - He doesn't replace bad with good, He <b>URNS</b> the bad into good.	<b>30</b> Longsuffering - He is not willing that any should perish, but makes Himself known - and waits - wanting many to respond.		