

Garden Gleanings

November 2024

A monthly publication of the Garden Community Church

MOVIE NIGHT!

The ladies of Garden Church and a few guests enjoyed a relaxing evening of fun at our newly finished church office Activity Center. The youth room full of couches with popcorn popping and a table full of snacks created the perfect movie-watching atmosphere. We watched the movie, *Unsung Hero*, which is based on the true story of the Smallbone family and how they clung to family and faith through hard times, ending with the eventual success of their daughter, Rebecca St. James, and their family music business. The mother shines as the unsung hero in the film with her unwavering trust in God and her courage to hold the family together and press on through difficulty. Around 40 women/girls came out for the evening. We celebrated Cynthia's milestone birthday and ate and visited before the movie and at our intermission time, leaving with good take-aways from the film and refreshing fellowship.





The theme of the Fall Missions Conference was *Building on a Faithful Foundation of Missions*. It was held November 8-10. Friday night we got to hear from some of our retired missionaries. Nathaniel Goossen interviewed Abe and Judy Schmidt, who were missionaries in Panama, Aaron and Elisabeth Smith, who were missionaries to Granda, Elaine Goossen, who went with Joe to Brazil, and Norv and Ev Schrag who served in Kansas with CEF. The interviews were all recorded and then showed on Friday evening. Following the videos, food was served in the fellowship hall that was "native" to each of the mission fields.

Saturday morning, we had the privilege to hear from believers who have been persecuted for their faith in closed countries. Cinnamon Rolls were served in between sessions.

Sunday morning during the Sunday School hour, Tim Zook shared an update on their ministry with SonSet Solutions. Mike Bergen also shared about missions around the world that have roots from Garden. The kids were also able to get a taste of missions from Brianna Busenitz as she shared with them about her ministry.

Mike Bergen brought the morning message and the conference ended with an all church potluck in the fellowship hall.



Open House

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We hosted an open house for the new office and Activity Center on November 1st. The open house provided an opportunity for community members and church attendees to come and see our completed new space. Thank you to everyone who had a part in making this new space a blessing to our church and pray that we would be able to continue to use it to bless the community and those around us.



All Church Picnic

Once again we were blessed with beautiful weather for our Annual All Church Picnic that was held on October 20 at Heritage Park in Hesston.





Vonnie's Views

This fall, I studied through the book of Ezekiel. What a powerful and thought-provoking book! Even now, I find myself reflecting on the lessons I learned during my study. For those who wish to dive deeper into Ezekiel, I highly recommend the two commentaries I reference below. Both are accessible, clear, and geared toward ordinary readers who want to explore Ezekiel in greater depth.

Ezekiel was a prophet in Babylon, having been carried away during the second wave of the Babylonian conquest. His messages were directed to his fellow Israelites who remained in Jerusalem and its surrounding regions. These messages were urgent warnings: "It's not too late to repent!" Ezekiel called on his people to turn away from their sinful ways and return to God. He assured them that God was still willing to redeem and rescue them.

At the same time, Ezekiel also addressed the "fake news" circulating from the prophets in Jerusalem. The false prophets were giving unfounded assurance that God would never allow Jerusalem, especially the temple, to be destroyed. This was in stark contrast to the prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel himself, who repeatedly warned that judgment was imminent. The people of Jerusalem had refused to acknowledge their sins and their disregard for God's holiness. They had been blinded by pride, believing that as God's chosen people, they were somehow exempt from the consequences of their actions.

In addition to feeling exempt from God's discipline, the people were grumbling about God not being fair for the trouble they already faced with the two previous invasions and deportations. They felt it was unjust if they withstood "the worst of God's wrath" for the sins of their ancestors. While their ancestors had rebelled, the people Ezekiel wrote to were facing God's judgement for their *own* actions. Each generation is accountable for its own sin. In the first part of Ezekiel 18, God makes this abundantly clear. Salvation is not about being God's "chosen people" or about being raised the "right community." Salvation is about repentance and faith.

In the latter half of Ezekiel 18, God pleads with His people to repent. He takes no pleasure in the death of anyone (Ezekiel 18:23). As Dowden writes, "All that God expects from His people, He provides for them. The only way to 'get' a new spirit and a new heart is to go to God" (p. 101). Throughout Ezekiel and the writings of other prophets, the consistent call is for sinners to come to God for cleansing. Repentance, according to Ezekiel, involves a deep, genuine sorrow for sin which leads to a transformed heart, a new desire to obey God, and a deeper hunger to know Him more. (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

Ezekiel's message is one we still need to hear today. Just as the people of Judah rejected their accountability to a holy God, many people today continue to live as though they are beyond the reach of divine judgment. Ezekiel's warnings serve as a reminder that no one is exempt from standing before God to account for their choices. As Dowden writes, "The people of Judah did not just need to be rescued from Babylon; they needed to be rescued from their sins" (p. 98).

Ezekiel's call to repentance is not only for the people of his time but also for us today. As believers, we are charged with calling others to abandon the path of destruction and choose the path of life. I often ask myself: Is God's passionate call to sinners, as expressed through Ezekiel, clearly heard through me? If not, what's holding me back? It's a challenge worth reflecting on.

References:

Dowden, Landon. *Exalting Jesus in Ezekiel*. Holman Bible Publishers, 2015.
Thomas, Derek. *Ezekiel: God Strengthens*. Evangelical Press, 1993.

"Therefore, I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, declares the Lord GOD.

Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin.

Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit!

Why will you die, O house of Israel?

For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord GOD; so, turn, and live."

Ezekiel 18:30-32

DECEMBER



Prayer Calendar and Memory Verse

Memory Verse: Micah 7:78—Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me. Rejoice not against me O mine enemy: When I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me.

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1 Thank God for loving us so much He sent Jesus.	2 Pray for the gatherings & celebrations this month to point to Christ & glorify Him.	3 Pray for nursing home workers to know the blessings & peace of Christ.	4 Pray Harvest Radio broadcasts clearly & powerfully.	5 Pray those bound by addiction find deliverance in Christ.	6 Ask God to use you to help someone today.	7 Pray for much fruit to result from Joe & Denise's trip to Brazil last month.
8 Thank God He saves us and holds us securely in His care.	9 Pray Daniel & Krissy have insight in how to connect with those around them.	10 Pray for an opportunity to share the hope of Christmas with someone.	11 Praise God for parents who faithfully bring their kids Wed nights - pray for changed lives.	12 Pray parents have wisdom in disciplining & training their children.	13 Pray for the church building James & Angela are involved with.	14 Pray for a fresh understanding of God's mercy & His heart.
15 Thank God for all His promises that we know are sure.	16 Pray the cold, hungry, hurting & scared are ministered to & find relief in Christ.	17 Pray for the Church of the Lamb in Brazil & their Tuesday prayer meetings.	18 Pray for a heart sensitive to see Christ all around you.	19 Pray many Jews would come to know their Messiah.	20 Pray for broken family relationships to be healed.	21 Pray for the children's Bible club this morning in Brazil.
22 Thank God for redemption, restoration & reconciliation.	23 Pray those far from home & family find others to share Christ's love with.	24 Pray many would come to know Jesus as Savior & to know He is so real.	25 Make time to sit and worship in stillness.	26 Pray for the opportunity to encourage someone who is hurting.	27 Pray pastors walk in obedience to God, in complete submission to Him.	28 Pray a hedge of protection around the marriages in our church family.
29 Thank God He is ALWAYS at work, whether we see it or not.	30 Pray the kids of our missionaries are drawn to the light of Christ.	31 Count your many blessings, name them one by one.				



Greetings from Elkhart, Indiana!

The picture is of the tower in Tuba City, Arizona. It sends out the signal for the western part of the Navajo Reservation. I want to thank you for praying for the permit to change the frequency and raise the power. The permit was granted! Now, when we go to help Across Nations with their transmitter sites, we can increase power and change frequency.

Do pray for a transmitter. The old transmitter will not operate at the new power and frequency without much work and accessories. We are looking at a used transmitter because it is available quickly compared to a new transmitter that needs time to construct. Pray for wisdom in the decision-making, too.

I praise God for your part in helping with the radio network for the Navajo.

Tim Zook, Broadcast Services Department Technician

SonSet Solutions

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WEDDING MEMORIES

On September 1, our family again welcomed a new member, when our daughter Susanna married Andrew Wiebe in a beautiful ceremony. We were so thankful that our daughter-in-law, Rafaelly was granted a tourist visa to the USA, so our whole family could be together for this celebration!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, HARVEST RADIO



Also on September 1, Harvest Radio celebrated 20 years on the air! Our staff did a wonderful job celebrating God's faithfulness through the special programming and by welcoming listeners' on-air participation and in-person visits.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

- Praise the Lord for the privilege of serving Him through Harvest Radio. Praise the Lord for you, our partners.
- Pray for wisdom to prioritize our time each day.
- Pray that Harvest Radio's programming would be used by God to reach the lost.

TOWER REPAIRS

One of the projects we presented last year was to do some maintenance on the Harvest Radio towers and give them a new coat of paint. Many of you contributed to that and we thank you for that! Now that it is dry season, it is the ideal time to do this since the road is in good condition and there is no danger of thunderstorms.



The crew we hired has done other tower work for us in the past and continues to do a good job. The owner is 78 years old but that hasn't slowed him down as he spends 4-5 hours at a time on the tower!

SERVER UPGRADE

Jesse Regier from Omaha spent nearly 2 weeks with us and upgraded the Harvest Radio server and



computer network. We are so thankful for his help!

CHRISTIAN RADIO IN NOVA RUSSAS, BRAZIL

GoosseNews

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