

# Garden Gleamings

May 2023

A monthly publication of the Garden Community Church

## WoMin Plant Exchange

On a warm, but blustery, afternoon several GCC ladies gathered under the church portico to make May Day Baskets and share garden plants. We made 40 total gifts which consisted of a potted flower, a bag of cookies, and a greeting card from the church. Fourteen of these were hand-delivered by the attendees to our church shut-ins/elderly. The rest were taken to neighbors and acquaintances, sharing the love to others outside of our church. We then visited about our plants and plant divisions that we brought to be shared amongst ourselves. Everyone left with a bag or more of new plants to be added to their gardens. It was a pleasant afternoon working together, enjoying the company, and sharing in our excitement for spring and gardening.

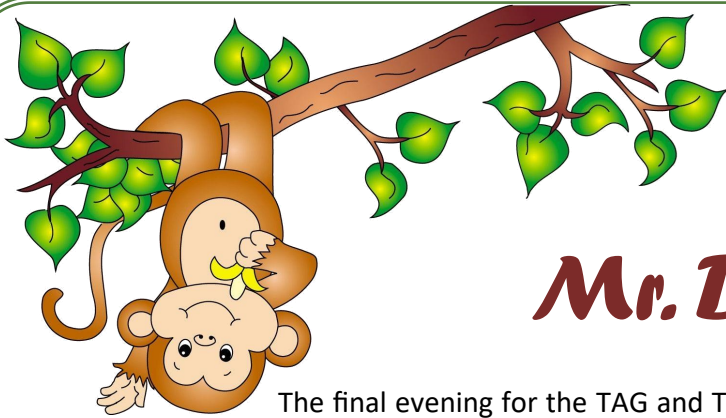
*For, lo, the winter is past,  
The rain is over and gone;  
The flowers appear on the earth;  
The time of the singing of birds is come.  
Song of Solomon 2:11-12*



## Quilting Bee

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, ladies had the opportunity to jump back in time to an "Old Fashioned Quilting Bee"! Originally two different times were planned to tie 3 quilts. But the 15 ladies that gathered in the morning were so efficient that they completed the 3 quilts for Camp David Kids in an hour and a half and the evening time was canceled. These quilts will be on the beds of Camp David campers when they arrive at camp and will also be able to take the quilts home with them at the end of camp.





# Family Fun Night with Mr. Dan & Artie

The final evening for the TAG and TeamKid families was a HUGE success!! The evening began with families gathering together around the tables in Fellowship Hall for a delicious spaghetti dinner prepared by Erin Koehn, Cynthia Quick and Julie Nelson. A big shout out and thanks goes to our Youth group and sponsors who provided great help in serving *and* cleaning up. Their joyful and willing hearts spoke volumes to those whom they served.



Following the meal, a program in the sanctuary was enjoyed by all - both young and old! Mr. Dan and his monkey puppet Artie, were the featured attraction. Little did we know how much valuable spiritual information could be given in such a fun and clear way through the antics of a monkey puppet. The presentation was interactive and engaged both our kids and adults on the stage. Lots of laughter and good times for everyone.



At the conclusion of the presentation, Mr. Dan gave a very complete and simple Gospel message and there were 8 individuals who responded to his call for Salvation! We praise God for these saved souls!

As our Children's Wednesday evening Discipleship Ministries came to end with this event, our Ministry Coordinators have reflected back on our year and we praise God for the great opportunity and responsibility that teachers and staff have in lovingly imparting Truth to those children whom God has placed under our care. This year we had a number of community families, (some who have no church affiliation) send their kiddos to our classes. We are prayerfully considering creative ways to stay connected with these families throughout the summer months. Pray for the Coordinator Team who are already looking ahead to next year. Curriculum choices and teacher positions are needing to be filled. God has a plan and we must be sensitive to His leading. What a privilege to be the hands and feet of Jesus!





# High School Graduates



*Kylee Nelson—  
Hesston High School*

Kylee plans to attend Hutchinson Community College to major in their Physical Therapy Assistant Program



*Jonathan Williams—  
Home School*

Jonathan plans to work at P & M and will take some business courses online

# Seniors '23



## Eighth Grade

**Josh Koehn**—Moundridge Middle School

**Brett Nelson**—Heston Middle School

**Wyatt Sommerfeld**—Goessel Jr High School



## College Graduates

**Cody Wohlgemuth** graduated from Hutchinson Community College with an Associates of Applied Sciences degree. He is working as a grounds-man for Drisco Drilling Co.

**Nate Goossen** graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering technology from the University of Central Missouri. He is working full time for Bott Radio Network.

**Tyler Mason** graduated from Wichita State University with a Bachelor degree in Media Arts with emphasis in film making. He plans to continue working at Amazon while looking for a full time job.

**Seth Hiebert** graduated from Ozark Christian College with a Bachelor of Arts in Bible and Ministry. His plan for the next year is to work in the residency program of Southland Christian Church in Lexington, Kentucky. He will train/serve in the Pastoral Care Ministry.

**Michelle Morrison** graduated from Southern College of Optometry in Memphis, Tennessee with a Doctor of Optometry. She is working in Topeka.

# Congratulations

# GRADUATES!

# ADULT/CHILD PRAYER MINISTRY

## Kaycee Mason—Larry & Jeanette Friesen/ Tonia Busenitz

Tonia—I love having the opportunity to pray specifically for our youth and to get the chance to interact with them on a personal level. I probably would not have made the effort to do this on my own. It has been a privilege.

Kaycee—It is encouraging to know there are people out there praying specifically for me.



## Brett Nelson—Scott & Amy Vogt

Amy—This ministry is a great way to stay involved with the youth in our church.



## Aiden Friesen—Pat Dirks

Pat—My prayer for Aiden is that he will encounter Jesus and have a fresh measure of His presence daily.



## Esther Quick—Kerry Britten & Julia Renich

Kerry—Whenever I see Esther, her face lights up! It's a joy to know she feels loved and cared for; I love to find out what's going on in her life so I can pray for her.

Julia—Esther, A Beautiful name meaning: love, beauty, purity, star, secret, hidden, justice, a stirring name to rouse courage and strength for all those who bear it.. As you continue to put Jesus first in your life, may you be the hidden star that shines in this world.



# Vonnie's Views

There's no doubt about it: we live in a confusing time. Everywhere we turn we encounter lies, departure from reality, distress, and instability. The prophet Isaiah sums it up, *our courts oppose the righteous, and justice is nowhere to be found. Truth stumbles in the streets, and honesty has been outlawed. Yes, truth is gone, and anyone who renounces evil is attacked.* Isaiah 59:14-15a (all quotes from NLT). Isaiah's words to ancient Israel are just as relevant to us today.

The prophet Jeremiah was called to address Judah during the reigns of three of the last kings before the Babylonian conquest. Here's what he wrote *When will you stop running? When will you stop panting after other gods? But you say, "Save your breath. I'm in love with these foreign gods, and I can't stop loving them now!"* Jeremiah 2:25 Isn't this the cry of our own culture?? "I was made this way. I can't help what I crave or love. My desires are my destiny to follow."

What's a Christian to do in this situation? Fold up, hunker down, pull up the drawbridge and wait for the end? Here's God's advice: *This is what the Lord says: "Stop at the crossroads and look around. Ask for the old, godly way, and walk in it. Travel its path, and you will find rest for your souls. But you reply, "No, that's not the road we want!"* Jeremiah 6:16

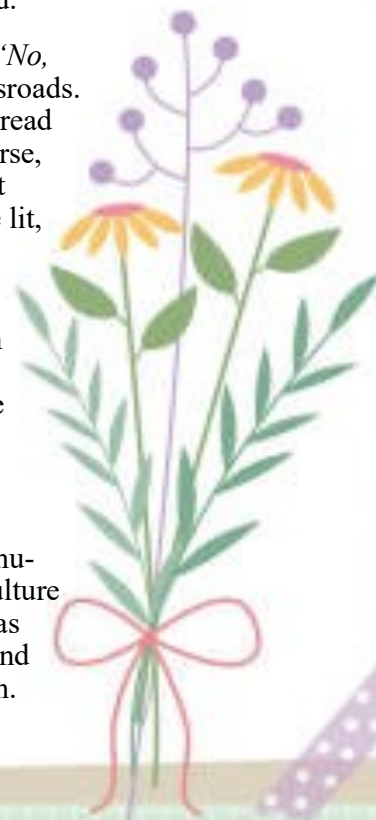
God says: *Stop at the crossroads and look around.* What are we looking for? People who are lost are disoriented. They don't know where they are or where they are going. Rather than barreling on, it is wise to stop and take account of what's around you. What landmarks you see? Look at what's behind you and what is visible ahead of you. Our society, like ancient Judah, never stops to ask questions or seek truth. It is not wise to doggedly push forward blinded by a strong delusion onto a path blinded to (or ignoring) the consequences of that choice.

What's next after we've gotten our bearings? We are to *ask for the old, godly way and walk in it. Travel its path, and you will find rest for your souls.* What is that ancient way? It is not nostalgia or living in the "good old days." The old, godly way is the Truth as revealed in Scripture. The ancient path is the Biblical path. It is the good way of wisdom marked out by the Word of God.

What did the people of Judah say when pointed to truth and back to God? *"No, that's not the road we want!"* Ancient Judah made a bad choice at the crossroads. They chose the broad road that leads to destruction. And it was disastrous (read Lamentations for the details). It was heartbreaking in the short term but worse, it was tragic considering eternity! By contrast, when we choose the ancient and godly path, Psalm 119 says our way will be blameless, our path will be lit, our minds will be transformed by God's wisdom.

Standing at the crossroads is a time for decision. Each of us has the ability and the authority to decide for only one person: ourselves. But our decision for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, Biblical thinking, and living what we believe has a ripple effect. When we pursue righteousness, our life changes, transforming our interactions with others, impacting their lives. When we faithfully internalize Scripture, we live out Truth—even when it goes against the flow of culture.



Obedience to God's commands influences our home, workplace, and community. When we live this way, we will not enjoy "warm fuzzies" from our culture because we are creating ripples with lives permeated by Truth. Jeremiah was mocked, persecuted, and threatened with assassination. But he found (and we will find) rest for our souls as we faithfully follow the ancient path.



# JUNE

## Prayer Calendar and Memory Verse

**Memory Verse: Colossians 4:2-3—Devote yourselves to prayer; stay alert in it with thanksgiving. At the same time, pray also for us that God may open a door to us for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ.**

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
				<b>1</b> Pray for open doors for missionaries to proclaim the gospel.	<b>2</b> Elwyn and Linda Goossen	<b>3</b> Chuck and Connie Myers
<b>4</b> Joe & Denise Goossen	<b>5</b> The Lord God - merciful and gracious, longsuffering, full of goodness and truth.	<b>6</b> Hannah and Josh Zook	<b>7</b> James and Rosangela Goossen	<b>8</b> Peter and Rachel Hansen	<b>9</b> Ukraine - printing press and local churches.	<b>10</b> Ivan and Mary Goossen
<b>11</b> Mark and Mollie Kunkee	<b>12</b> The Lord God - Creator, Redeemer, King, Sovereign over all.	<b>13</b> Josh and Camila Goossen	<b>14</b> Daniel and Krissy Hansen	<b>15</b> Tim and Renee Zook	<b>16</b> Harvest Radio	<b>17</b> Camp David and the kids that come.
<b>18</b> Across Nations radio stations	<b>19</b> The Lord God - Almighty, Holy, Perfect Goodness	<b>20</b> Nate Goossen - BOTT Radio	<b>21</b> Sonset Radio Transmitters	<b>22</b> Café y Graca	<b>23</b> Ashley Williams family - ministry in Honduras	<b>24</b> Youth considering going into ministry.
<b>25</b> Sunday School teachers	<b>26</b> The Lord God - Father, Provider, Protector, able to keep us.	<b>27</b> Good News clubs and CEF outreach this summer.	<b>28</b> Local Bible studies	<b>29</b> Our members in the workplace	<b>30</b> Pray for the Holy Spirit to penetrate hearts and minds with the truth.	



After a month of weddings and celebrations it's good to be back to our "normal" routine again. While we were away in Fortaleza (the capital of our state) for the family gatherings and weddings, the believers in Mucambo started getting together at the park on their own initiative, encouraged by our friend, Anderson, who comes every month to lead a youth service/group. At the park, they sing songs, pray and build each other up through God's Word. It is joyful to see them seeing themselves as a church body and doing what Jesus told us to do: love Him, love our neighbor, and go make disciples. They get together on Sunday evenings, then, after finishing, go to Café & Graca to share what they've learned. **Praise the Lord** with us as we rejoice, seeing his kingdom increase in Mucambo and His church growing stronger.



## The Girls

After 10 weeks, Camila finished a Bible study with Alicia, Rebeca and Isabella, reading a book together called: *A Girl After God's Heart* by Elizabeth George. These three girls, who are all about the same age (12-14), are the only believing girls that faithfully go to our activities. They said it was good and wanted to keep studying and reading another book! Camila is praying about and planning to read the book called: *And the Bride Wore White* by Dannah Gresh. **Please pray** that God gives Camila wisdom as she disciples these girls and teaches them to be obedient to God. Camila really relates to them because it was around that same age (12-13) when she decided to follow Jesus, so she has a special love and deep care for these girls.



## The Boys

There are about 10-12 teenage boys who are believers and fatherless (earthly) in our church body. Their ages are between 14-21. Almost all of them study in the morning this year and some all day. The norm in Brazil is half-days of school, but that's changing. God has been moving and guiding us into a different direction and approach to disciple them into leaders in their homes, beginning by working with their hands. Joshua's dad, Ivan, has a shop in his yard. One of the ideas is to teach the boys to work with their hands by making something that is needed in their homes, or fixing something in their houses. In doing that, they would be showing Christ's love to their families, creating opportunities to show what He has done in their lives. **Please pray** for Joshua and Ivan especially as they are "fathers" for these boys, teaching them to be faithful servants and hard workers, showing their faith through the work of their hands for the glory of their Heavenly Father.



## Happy Mother's Day!

**Please pray**, as we will be having a celebration for the moms of the kids we work with and other moms in the community. We have planned a very special time and are hoping many will show up and be blessed. **Pray** that we can speak life into their lives and for a bold spirit to share how their love for their children is a small reflection of God's love for each one of them.

**We also wish to each of you moms a Happy Mother's Day!**



Good morning,

May 17, 2023

What a whirlwind April was for us with two weddings and many visitors!



The first wedding was Elwyn's brother, James, who was widowed nearly 2 years ago. We are so happy for him that God brought Angela into his life! All of his kids and their families were able to come from the US for the wedding, as well as several other family members. This picture is of the Goossens who were present at the wedding.



The second wedding, two weeks later, was of our son, Andrew and Rafaelly. Our son Nathan and several of Linda's family also joined us, so the photo to the left is all the Goossens and Barkmans present. What a joyful occasion!



We have two big projects going on at Harvest Radio. The above picture shows the almost finished (desperately needed) repair/update of the staff room and bathrooms.

And if you click [here](#) you can watch a short video update of the Solar installation project. Praise the Lord it is connected to the grid and producing!

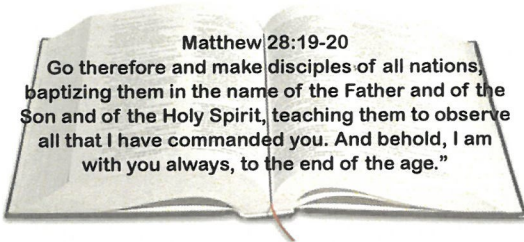
Thank you for standing with us as we use radio to share the love of Jesus to the lost in NE Brazil!

Elwyn & Linda

# Avant

# In Brazil

## Some snapshots of what God is doing in Mucambo...



It gives us great joy to tell you of some of the more recent decisions to follow Christ that have been made among young adults we have come to know and love.

These three couples, (among other young people) have become a part of our lives. They, almost without fail, have come to the coffee shop on Sunday nights for fun, food and coffee.

Left to right they are: Carlos and Ingrid, Zequinha and Adelaide, Geniclei and Gracielle. The girls made decisions in the past couple of years, two of them with our co-worker, Rafaelly. The guys took a bit longer, but they confessed Christ with Ivan in January of this year at the end of a Bible study of many weeks using the book The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus, which we highly recommend.



And then there is Pedro. He is a 21 year old self-taught (for the most part) English speaker. We came to really know him when he began coming to "EnglishTalk", a conversational English time on Thursday nights. He has often brought other friends with him. Through many conversations and Café e Graça activities, he made a decision for Christ on March 17! He is soooo excited which is already natural for his personality.

What an opportunity!! Again this year, local schools asked us to host a "field trip" and talk to their high schoolers about life. The principals and teachers realize they need all the help they can get in this confusing world. We are happy to work with them! They have seen changes (some big) in the students who have given their lives to Christ. We have a time for serious talk and time for playing games. Here, Ivan is saying, "Yes, there are absolutes." (2+2 will always equal 4.) And he was free to use the Word to explain this.



"To God be the glory, great things He hath done!" On March 26, we had our second baptism in Mucambo. It was very hot and very wonderful. It was more public this time since last time was in a private pond and this time was at the local reservoir.



14 young people were baptized, four of which were our grandchildren. What joy! Another grandchild wanted to be baptized but was very sick that day. Pray, pray pray for these kids. Of course, they are in all stages of commitment to Christ. And the walk will not be easy. But we need to pray and pray for them. Thank you for joining us in this!

What a joyous month April was for us as a family! Ivan's brother, James, married again on April 8. His first wife, Molly, had served well with him for many years, even with many physical difficulties. And now the Lord has given him Angela to continue with in missionary service. Ivan's nephew, Andrew, married our coffee shop ministry co-worker, Rafaelly, on April 22. They were beautiful weddings. For us, this was in part because our kids and grandkids were all with us!



Many evangelical churches in Brazil start small, meeting in homes, under a carport, or in someone's yard to study the Bible. Eventually, a physical church property becomes necessary for the growth and health of a church. In Brazilian culture, a property also gives legitimacy to the church in the eyes of the community.

The difficulty is that small churches of twenty-five members or less cannot come up with the funds necessary to purchase a property on their own. This hinders growth in many churches throughout Brazil today.

From "Brazil: Multiplying Churches" on the Avant Ministries web site.

Please check out this link to see what the Lord is doing to provide for these small but growing churches. Please consider and pray about what you can do to help.

[Brazil: Multiplying Churches](#)

Now that you have read most of our letter, we hope you have prayed along the way and that you will continue to pray. The longer we serve the Lord, the more convinced we are that God expects us to pray about what HE is doing. We are grateful, as missionaries, to have so many joining us in the work in this way.

There is one more little guy we would like you to pray for. His name is Raniel. He apparently has a form of epilepsy. His parents and big sister (about 8) often came to the coffee shop until he was born. For obvious reasons, they don't have the same freedom to do that now. But they still occasionally come, and we often see them in town where they have a small clothing store.

Will you pray with us for Raniel and his family? The "free" medical help here is highly unreliable. And they are working hard in a difficult economy to provide what their son needs. It is tough. We hope we can encourage them and eventually help them to rely on Christ for their salvation and for their needs.



We asked Pedro to do a short video of his testimony. He was very pleased to do so. While it is a little longer than we had wanted, you will enjoy his excitement. Do pray for him. He has already made some major changes in his life. But we all know that some hard things may come his way because of his decision to follow Christ. He is just an example of many who have been transformed here in large part because of your prayers.

[Pedro's Testimony](#)

If you would like to give to our ministry, please go to [avantministries.org/give](http://avantministries.org/give).

Or send a check (earmarked Ivan Goossen) to  
Avant Ministries  
10000 N Oak Trafficway  
Kansas City, MO 64155