

Hope for the City Saturdays

Your invited to participate in our Hope for the City Saturday May 4th 8:30 - 12:00. The first Saturday of each month we are providing a *Ministry Together* opportunity in the city which gives us the opportunity to be generous with our lives in words and deeds as we humbly engage the culture of our city.

This month we will be partnering with Ezekiel Ministries. Ezekiel Ministries exists to share the love and truth of Jesus to families in inner-city Columbia. They do this by providing tangible help in the areas of education and family literacy. Ezekiel's two main programs are an after-school program and a mentoring program for under-resourced children in Downtown Columbia, SC. Their long term goals are to strengthen the family structure and help families break the cycle of generational poverty. They focus on academics, character development, spiritual wellness, and teamwork.

We will be working at EZE Farm on Harrison Road. EZE Farms is a sustainable urban farm started in 2016 by Ezekiel Ministries in Columbia, SC. EZE Farms exists to mentor urban youth in faith, farming and entrepreneurship. EZE Farms creates apprenticeship opportunities for middle and high school boys. Through the apprenticeship, these young men learn the good news of God's kingdom, the principles of sustainable farming and small business management.

Join us as we come alongside our neighbors at the EZE Farm at 2323 Harrison Road. We will meet at 3100 Covenant Road at 8:30 and ride over to the work site together. This is a great opportunity for you to get to know this ministry and how we can partner with them in the work of God's kingdom right in our church's backyard. Come and get your hands dirty and do ministry together as we serve this ministry helping them to achieve their vision.

Gospel Change

In our adult Life Group on Sunday mornings we are studying Gospel Change. Last week we discovered the good news that God changes us. His purpose is to make a new humanity through the perfect human, Jesus Christ. But until we reach that perfection, we're being changed. One of the ways that God changes us and others is by putting us in human relationships. Human relationships are messy but necessary for change. If our relationships are one of the means that God uses to bring change in our own and others lives let me suggest 3 things we need to remember.

First, we need change. When we hide behind perceived perfection and strength our relationships are detrimental. But if we will admit shortcomings and weaknesses our relationships will benefit us and others. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Mt 5:3).

Second, we need to be honest. When I keep quiet I hurt myself and others. Loving one another requires speaking the truth in love, forgiving one another, encouraging one another, sharing in one another's flaws with words that give grace to build up. "What's wrong?", can't be answered with the stoicism of, "Nothing, I just need to get over it."

Third, look for and give hope. You and the other person in your relationships don't have what it takes but Jesus does. Therefore, the gospel must be the center of our relationships for hope. Paul Tripp says, "The cross of Jesus Christ is the epicenter of hope in every relationship. Jesus was willing to face the ultimate in suffering, the rejection of his Father, so that we could experience reconciliation with Him and with one another." He changes our hearts so that everything changes in our words and our actions. Therefore, keep the gospel central to give hope for change through your relationships.





Catalyst Prayer

Catalyst Prayer is a season (April - June) of corporate and private prayer for the Vision and Mission of CCC, and her future planning. Please pray with us privately and corporately by using the weekly "Catalyst Prayer Theme". Also, sign up to pray during the Day of Prayer May 22nd.

Catalyst Prayer Theme #4 - Life Together

The Mission and Vision of Christ Covenant Church are centered in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, our Mission is: *Living in and Living Out the Gospel in Worship, Life, and Ministry Together* What we do - Life Together - is not possible without the gospel. Therefore, we pray that we will experience gospel renewal that we may have Life Together. We can pray the following that God may give us grace to do Life Together at CCC:

- ❖ *In our Life Together at CCC we would walk together worthy of our calling through the gospel of Jesus Christ.* I therefore,... urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit-just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call- one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. - Eph 4:1-6
- ❖ *In our Life Together at CCC we would manifest the reality and power of the gospel in our love for one another.* A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." - Jn 13:34-35
- ❖ *In our Life Together at CCC we would overlook offenses, forgive one another, and help one another when struggling with weakness and sin.* Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense. - Pr 19:11; Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. - Eph 4:32; Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. - Gal 6:1-2
- ❖ *In our Life Together at CCC we would think of ourselves less and one another more through the gospel of Jesus Christ.* Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, - Phil 2:3-5
- ❖ *In our Life Together at CCC we would encourage one another everyday through the lenses of the gospel.* Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. - Heb 3:12-14