

My Dear Friends at Bethel,

“We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves.” (2 Corinthians 4:7 – NLT) These words are one of my favorite descriptions of who we are in Christ. It reminds me that perfection, being the best, being the strongest, being the sharpest, is not the goal. We are fragile and easily broken, and this makes us a wonderful vessel for displaying the light and power of Christ, because no one can think mistakenly that anything great has been accomplished by our abilities. May our community always know that we are weak but our Savior is strong.

In this past year we have learned about the weakness of man and the power of God through sermon series like “Knuckleheads to Ninjas”. This was a look at the disciples of Jesus who lacked so much, but after the death and resurrection of Christ and the coming of the Holy Spirit, all their deficiencies were more than made up for in Christ! We also increased our understanding of who God is through the study of Exodus and learned from a man that was confident that he was winning at life, by the power of Christ, through the study of Philippians. It is my prayer that, by our journey together, your faith and trust in God has grown, and that you can say that you are at least a little more like Christ.

In terms of accomplishment together, I’m celebrating the addition of eight new members and three baptisms. I’m excited for those who have been introduced to Christ through the 101 classes. I’m thrilled to see more first time LifeGroup members than ever. I’m also thankful to God that we could help twenty-five struggling families with groceries at Christmas time; a combined value of over \$3000! It’s also hard to put a number on the new connections we have made with families through our Easter events, Block Party, Trunk or Treat and special Christmas service. I pray God will use it all that more people may know Christ and yield their lives to Him for his service.

What will God do this year? I hope that you will join me in prayer daily asking Him to reveal Himself, and change more lives in and out of our church for His glory. I pray that we will make even greater gains into our community to be the light we are called to be by showing the love of Christ and sharing the gospel of Christ to Salvation. Inside the church I’m praying for new and deeper relationships cross generationally, that we might push and pull each other to more life change and good works (Heb 10:24). Please pray about these things with me. Apart from Christ we can do nothing, but in Christ our “fragile clay jars” will display His power!

Grateful to be worshipping our Savior with you,

Pastor David and Kristen