



homepage

Hispanic Ministries

A live Spanish translation (via wireless headsets) was provided for the Saturday, December 12 Singing Christmas Tree performances. A Spanish version of the printed program was also provided for those whose English skills made it difficult to follow the clear Gospel message of the narration and music.

Over the Thanksgiving weekend, our Gym was used by the Spanish speaking Bethany Church for special worship and prayer services. Since last spring our tutors have assisted twenty-one English Language Learners in strengthening their language skills. It is our desire to become much more intentional in ministry to the various ethnic communities of Grand Island.

Christmas Value of Relationships (Cont. from pg. 1)

relationships and if I want to be used by God I must develop personal relationships with people and live out Jesus' life there.

Christmas reinforces this lesson in both negative and positive ways. I watch people launch to the streets during the season with horns blaring and tempers flaring. They storm the stores like commandos on a life and death mission – and the death will be of anyone who gets in their way. I see people herded in mass (sometimes even in church events) like cattle to be roped, branded and corralled. When my stomach is churning, I turn to look at a tiny stall – out of the spotlight, away from the big business of a census, secluded from overflow crowds – and I see God enter our world in a very small and extremely intimate way.

God loved us and sent His Son – an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 1 John 4:10

December 2009- homepage newsletter

The Christmas Value of Relationships

By Pastor Mike Neely

The birth of Jesus is an intersection of history and eternity: Eternal God, stepping into history. God who is Spirit putting on skin. God transcendent, holy other, born Immanuel: God, with us. God drawing near in most vulnerable and available form: A baby, Jesus – Jehovah's Salvation.

We're celebrating the Christmas season this year in a study series that compares values: Ours and Gods. Christmas celebrates the intersection of history and eternity and as a result there is a collision of values: God's and man's, eternal and temporal, treasure and tensile.

The first Christmas displays God's value of relationships – personal, face-to-face, incarnational, need-meeting friendship. God's purposes and plans require incarnational ministry!

Certainly God *could* do anything in any way that He chooses. He does not *need* humans, and He did not *need* to take up flesh and live a human life to accomplish His ends. Jesus referenced this as a subpoint to other lessons. In Matthew 3:9 Jesus said that, "God is able from these stones to raise

Harvest Banquet Challenge The God Zone

At the Harvest Banquet and throughout the month of November, Pastor Mike has challenged all in the church family to live in The God Zone - living and serving fully yielded to God, beyond what we can do within our own means and strength.



Each person within our church family is challenged to plan and pray about joining our congregation in The God Zone as we move forward in several ministries – Family Ministries, Missional Ministries, and Fund Releasing Ministries.

A brochure and response card is available at the Church Lobby display. Over the next few days seek God's direction about how you might join our church in "The God Zone". We invite you to place your God Zone Response card in the offering plate one of these next Sundays.

continued on page 4

GRAND ISLAND EVANGELICAL FREE
THE HEART OF CHRISTMAS
Christmas Eve
Services at:
4:00 & 5:30 p.m.
giefc.org

The birth of Jesus is the very heart of Christmas. And Christ's birth reveals much about the very heart of God Himself.

Come worship with us on Christmas Eve. Worship services will be at 4:00 and 5:30 p.m. Friday, December 24.

Your family and friends will be drawn into the wonder of the Christmas event which split history in two. The identical worship services will feature carols, music, candle light, and a short Advent message. Each element of the service will focus our attention on the heart of Christmas. Please note: our Nursery Staff will be worshipping with their families on Christmas Eve.

Inside Info

- Marriage Tool Box ----- 2
- Constitution Change ----- 2
- Sunday Messages Aired ----- 3
- Emergency Corner ----- 3

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Grand Island NE 68801
2609 South Blaine



Grand Island
Evangelical Free Church
homepage

NON-PROFIT
ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
GRAND ISLAND,
NE
PERMIT NO. 572

“A Place to Belong”

Loading the Marriage Tool Box

A couple of years ago there appeared in the window of a jewelry store in Hollywood a sign with the following words, "WE RENT WEDDING RINGS". Might be funny if it didn't ring so true. On the best days marriage is an adventure, on the worse it can seem a lot more like a nightmare; especially if we don't have the right tools in the tool box to do the repairs that seem to be a constant. In an effort to help marriages with tool-up GIEFC will be kicking off Five Marriage C-Groups (Caring, Coaching & Connecting Small Groups) in January. Watch announcements for details. In addition PUPS Adult Community will be hosting a 13 week *Love & Respect Marriage Seminar* Sunday mornings beginning February 20. On Saturday, February 27 GIEFC will host a one day Focus on Family marriage simulcast. Take advantage of these many opportunities to fill your Marriage Tool Box.

Training Pastors with Gospelink in Zambia



This summer Pastor Aron and Pastor Matt provided classroom training for 35 Zambian pastors.

Pastor Paul Hofrichter will be teaching in late January



"We greet you in the precious name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We wish to express our gratitude and thanksgiving to you for Pastors Matt and Aron and your generous gift to us through them. Yours Faithfully, Gospelink/Lusak-based Preachers"

Constitutional Proposal Update

The church membership met on Sunday morning, November 15 at a Special Congregational Meeting to consider a proposal that would change the quorum required to modify key elements of the Church's Constitution. Presently, this change requires a unanimous vote of one half of the 387 members, without any abstentions. The motion failed 166-2.

The proposal would have redefined "a quorum for convening a Congregational Business Meeting to be those present and with the consent of the Church Moderator of the meeting." In light of this decision, another proposal will likely be presented sometime in January. The goal of these proposals are to relax the very restrictive nature of the Constitution as it presently stands. At present, it is very difficult to make necessary changes such as adopting the new EFCA Statement of Faith as our own.

Upcoming Events

Dec 13
Children Singing 11:00 am

Dec 20
Last Tree Concert

Dec 27
No Sunday School/Adult Communities

Jan 6
Wednesday Evening Ministries Resume

Jan 15-17
Middle School Ski Trip

Jan 30
Children's Ministries Training Seminar

Sunday Morning Messages on the Air



December 6 marked the beginning of a new ministry to central Nebraska. My Bridge Radio KROA 95.7FM is now airing the Sunday morning sermons at 10:00 a.m. Sundays. This should provide a new opportunity for the church family to invite others to taste the flavor of ministry at GIEFC. Pray that God will use this effort to touch the lives of those who are seeking to understand God and His Word.

This new ministry is one of the areas that the church is being challenged to step into The God Zone (see page 1). It is hoped that the church will respond with financial support to assist in the expenses for this outreach. One last note, archived sermons will be aired. Production and editing makes it difficult to utilize the previous Sunday's messages.

NEW MEMBERS

Doris Wilson



Doris Wilson benefited from growing up in a very godly and large Swedish immigrant family. She recognized and responded to her need for a Savior as a young girl. Doris says that over the years she went through sporadic periods of spiritual growth and service. But, the Holy Spirit was faithfully nudging her towards a fuller understanding of God's plan for her life. As she has attended here over the past ten years, she feels she has found "A Place to Belong" through Women's Bible Studies and serving funeral meals. Her son, Lynn, is an Elder and her granddaughter, Sara White, is very involved in our youth ministries.

These individuals have applied for church membership. They have been approved by the Board of Elders. They are now being presented to the church membership. Following a thirty day comment period, they will be welcomed as voting members of the congregation. Membership applications are available at www.giefc.org.

Providing Leadership through Service

The Board of Elders serve as the leadership team of the church. They are charged to shepherd the spiritual life of the church and to develop vision and goals fostering spiritual growth. A significant amount of their time is spent in prayer for the church, ministering to the church family, and providing direction for this growing congregation.

Present Elders are:

Birger Benson	Gary Schulte
Greg Epp	Mark Stines
William Feely	Lynn Wilson
Steve Morris	Rich VanZyl
Mike Neely	

They are very open to input from the church family regarding comments, concerns, and future direction of the church. Additional responsibilities include appointing Ministry Committee members, approving applications for membership, church discipline, facilitating church meetings, and budgetary oversight alongside the Trustees. Elders are elected annually and can serve up to six consecutive years. Don Plinsky recently stepped off the Board due to unforeseen scheduling issues.

Emergency FYI Planning for the Unexpected

Fire Emergencies - If the fire alarm is heard, everyone is to exit to a safe distance from building, in the event of inclement weather, reciprocal arrangements have been made with St. Leo's Catholic Church to evacuate to their facility.

N1H1 Preparedness - Disinfecting and cleaning efforts have been stepped up. Hand sanitizer dispensers are located throughout the building. Adults and children should only attend ministry events when they are free of fever and nausea.