



## Encouraging Kingdom Glimpses from the Western Region

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This week I've been meeting with some of our church leaders across our Western Region Conference (Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, Kansas and Missouri). The Western Region is one of our smaller conferences consisting of about 25 congregations throughout the five states listed above.

### Author

The weekly eNews is provided by CGGC Executive Director Lance Finley



As you can imagine, there is often a significant distance between most of our churches scattered across the Midwest and Great Plains. Some of our churches have a two or three hour drive to find the next CGGC congregation. Pastor Kendall Hughes is the director of the Western Region Conference as well as the pastor of the Leadwood First Church of God in Leadwood, Missouri. Kendall has been my gracious host and guide this past week.

There are certainly some challenges in this region. They're experiencing the same aging challenges that many of our churches (and a lot of North American churches) are facing. Many of our congregations are located in rural areas or in struggling communities that are in decline. These communities often lack the jobs and economic opportunities needed to attract and keep younger families. Lots of kids have grown up in our churches and moved away to find work. The great distance between our congregations makes fellowship and connection a little more difficult than in some of our other regions (yesterday's itinerary started in Arkansas, traveled through eastern Oklahoma to Kansas, and then ended in Missouri). The challenges are real.

Yet in the midst of these challenges, our brothers and sisters in the Western Region are seeing beautiful glimpses of the kingdom of God break through. This week I've had the opportunity to sit across the table from some wonderful brothers and sisters in Christ and hear about what the Lord is doing in them and through them. A couple of things stand out to me.

First is their beautiful mix of gifts. I've sat across the table from evangelists, apostles, prophets, teachers and shepherds this week. There is a wonderful diversity of leadership across the region and it's demonstrated through each dear brother and sister operating within the gifting that God has given them for the building up of His church and the advancement of His kingdom. Their gifts and the fruits of their gifts is obvious.

Second is their commitment to living out Matthew 25. Our brothers and sisters in the Western Region are visiting those in prison, giving drink to the thirsty and food to the hungry, and clothing the naked. There is a consistent commitment across our churches in this region to live out Matthew 25 amidst their neighbors and communities. I've been so encouraged by the stories I've heard this week where our brothers and sisters are bearing witness to Jesus through their compassionate care of others. Many of these congregations are small but they are having an enormous influence on their communities through their commitment to live out Jesus' teachings in Matthew 25.

This is one of those weeks where I wish everyone could have the opportunity to see what I've been able to see and share in what I've been able to experience: my words just don't do it justice. God is at work and moving here; the need is great here and the challenges are great as well. Would you pray for our brothers and sisters in the Western Region? They see that the harvest is ready and they're asking for more workers for the harvest fields. Would join me in praying for His kingdom to come and His will to be done here on earth, in places like Oklahoma, Arkansas, Texas, Kansas and Missouri; as it is in Heaven?

Christ's Peace,  
**Lance**

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## **Check out the new "Contagious..." CGGC Online Community**

Check out "Contagious...", an online "commons" where CGGC folks will have the opportunity to interact about issues common to us all. All comments and postings are moderated. Throughout the rest of this year, we want to address our need for corporate confession and repentance, focusing on "I" and "we" rather than "you" and "they." As you read, please partner with the Holy Spirit in examining your heart.

If you would like your thoughts and comments to be considered for postings, or even would like something the Lord has laid on your heart to be considered as a posting, email Michael Martin ([comptech@cggc.org](mailto:comptech@cggc.org)) and request contributor status.

Don't forget, our ultimate purpose is to build the kingdom of God by aligning ourselves more closely with God, hearing his voice, and knowing his will. An essential component of this is rightly judging ourselves.

But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. (1 Corinthians 11:31)

May the body of Christ call within the body for a move of the Spirit in us.

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# Contagious...

*Collaborating for Kingdom Impact*