

2024 HeavenEarth Church Impact Report

We exist to make a lasting impact in our community.



“As the Father loved me, I too have loved you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I kept my Father’s commandments and remain in his love.”

John 15:9-10

It's hard to put into words how wonderful it is to see the authentic community and commitment to the way of Jesus that is growing in and through our extended church family. As Emily, our Executive Pastor, often says, **there's good soil at HeavenEarth. We want to take a moment with you to give thanks to God for the fruit that is coming out of that soil.**

Let's celebrate the fruit of our mission and values.

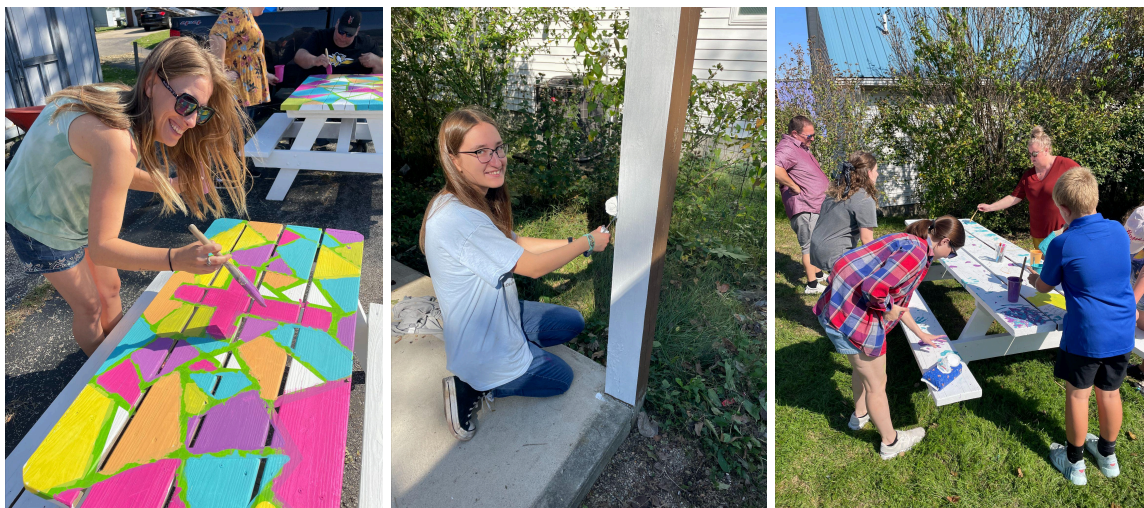
Our mission is to make a lasting impact in our community by building relationships with all kinds of neighbors, helping them to experience freedom from their burdens and helping each other to know Jesus and practice his way.

We value

- meeting people where they are and seeing them as masterpieces;
- practicing what Jesus says and does;
- fixing our eyes on Jesus and living by his Spirit;
- blessing our community through friendships and partnerships;
- and being grateful and responsible with all we're given.

Let's celebrate what God has done through us to fulfill our mission in alignment with our values.

Building Relationships with All Kinds of Neighbors



The pictures above are from our Harvest Gathering that took place in October. They offer a small glimpse into how we have people of different ages, with different struggles, from different faith backgrounds, and with different income levels, and yet we're growing together as a trust-based community with camaraderie in the way of Jesus. **Our goal isn't uniformity, but we are seeking unity in our mission and values.**

Here are some ways we've been meeting people where they are and building relationships with all kinds of neighbors.

- This year, **we again hosted several Get to Know You gatherings** at the Willard in Franklin, where we bought people pizza and wings and gave folks a chance to be known and to get to know each other. We had dozens of folks join us—new friends and old friends—at these gatherings.
- **We hosted a back-to-school night** with an ice cream sundae bar to meet students and school staff in our community where they are and to give them a boost to start the year.
- **We had another great year with our community garden** (more on that below). **This allowed us to offer free healthy food to our neighbors from July to October.**
- Our **Recovery Church group continues to engage people in all stages of life, recovery, and faith.** Recovery Church meets weekly on Wednesday nights and offers safe space, community, and spiritual support for folks in recovery from substance use and other harmful habits.

Below, you'll see our men's softball team (left) that included folks we typically see on Sunday mornings and also folks we only see at Recovery Church; also, there's a snapshot of our Sunday morning crew (right).



Helping People Experience Freedom from Their Burdens



Here are some things we did to help people experience freedom from their burdens:

- Through our Local Impact Fund, where **we dedicate at least 5% of giving to Day-to-Day Operations to local organizations**, we sponsored **Upstream Prevention’s Dream Recovery Dinner**. We are also supporting the great work of Heather Harris in her role as **Franklin Community Schools’ Hope Navigator**. In this role, Heather walks alongside students who are experiencing homelessness. We donated some money to **HeavenEarth Spaces, the 501c3 nonprofit created by HeavenEarth Church** that created affordable spaces for nonprofits and families (and who owns the building in which we meet. Finally, we gave money to **United Way’s Angel Tree** initiative that blesses families in our community at Christmastime.
- In addition to sponsoring Upstream’s Dream Recovery Dinner, Ross was invited to speak at the event to contribute to the dinner’s goal of celebrating the possibility, diversity and joy of recovery in Johnson County.
- Through our **Neighbor Assistance Fund** and through our members being the church in their ordinary lives, we have provided assistance and companionship to individuals and families in immediate crisis.
- Throughout this year, Ross continued to serve as the Chairman of **the Long Term Recovery Group**, the group that oversaw the long-term recovery efforts for folks who experienced damage from the tornado that hit Whiteland in March of 2023.
- We of course can’t highlight all of the ordinary and extraordinary ways “HeavenEarthlings” walked alongside people in the places where they live,

work, learn, and play, but there are many stories!

- **Our Garden Team** had an incredible season cultivating produce to offer weekly at a free stand outside our main entrance. We gave away dozens of pounds of healthy food to our neighbors from July to October.



Here is our Garden Team (left) as they were getting the garden going in the late spring; and also Ross and our friend Matt (right) at Upstream's Dream Recovery Dinner.

Helping People Know Jesus and Practice His Way

Ultimately, our primary purpose is to help each other follow Jesus and live like Jesus. We believe the greatest transformation happens when **we fix our eyes on Jesus, live by His Spirit, and practice what he says and does** (as our values say). Here are some ways we made progress with this.

- **We implemented “discipleship pathways”** designed to meet people where they are and help them practice essentials to being a disciple of Jesus. Last year, a group of us spent several meetings praying and discerning the *essentials* we want to invite folks to practice together, so they grow in bearing

the fruit of disciples of Jesus. This year, we started to implement tools that help us practice those essentials.



Here are some of the baptisms we celebrated this year! So amazing to witness!

- One key tool that helps folks practice these essentials is small groups. **We just launched two more groups** with about ten people per group. They both kicked off with a five-meeting plan that is an overview of our five discipleship essentials.
- **We celebrated baptisms** of two adults in our church as well as two twin babies (pictured above).
- **With the help of Kiara McGuyre, our Children's Ministry Assistant and our amazing, growing Kids Volunteer Team, we have improved the potential and capacity of Sunday Kids' Church greatly.** For example, we are now ready to serve three different age ranges on Sunday mornings whereas before we had all the younger ones in one room always.
- The **young adult house church we launched last year continues to meet.** This past year, they completed two ten-meeting plans, one that corresponds to our first discipleship essential, *shaped from the inside-out by practicing continuous relationship with God*, and another that corresponds to our second essential, *being humble, hungry and willing to seek Jesus's way*.
- Our **Sunday morning worship gathering has grown.** We have more volunteers contributing and serving. The atmosphere is warm, real, and communal. Lots of people stay after to spend time with each other well after

the service each week. Attendance has gone up significantly—and the people coming are of different ages and backgrounds.

Thank YOU for another great year!

We want to take a moment here to say a special, **big thanks to Ashley**, our Director of Operations, Hospitality and Joy. Ashley is transitioning off staff to be more present with her family and to invest more time and energy to her travel agent business. Ashley started with us in the spring of 2022. Ashley's gifts have blessed our community *tremendously*, and her work has grown the capacity of our mission greatly. Please take a moment to send Ashley your appreciation. She deserves it!

Thank you and thanks be to God. Our church is growing in our mission, and we couldn't do it without you. With your collaboration, support, and prayers, 2025 is going to be our most impactful year yet.