

The Agros Conference

“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.” – Matthew 13:44

The Faith that Finds the Treasure

“And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.” – 1 John 5:4

Riverbend Bible Church
Atchison, KS
November 2, 2024



Welcome to the 4th annual Agros conference! Agros is a fellowship of pastors and apprentices who aim to see churches strengthened and spread in every corner of northeast Kansas and northwest Missouri. You can learn more at our website: agrosfellowship.com. Thank you for making the sacrifice to strengthen our fellowship today. We have been praying for the Lord to use today's conference to fill up our faith to sacrifice joyfully for the heavenly treasure hidden in the Lord's harvest fields.

Jesus taught in Matthew 13:44 that his kingdom is hidden in what appears to be very ordinary: a field, an *agros*. We believe his kingdom is still hidden today in ordinary places, often called the ordinary means of grace: The Word, prayer, fellowship, and ordinances. And so, those who have found his hidden treasure have always been marked by extraordinary devotion to these ordinary means (see Acts 2:42).

But it's so easy for that devotion to falter. Our churches' mission to be in the world, but not of the world requires constant vigilance against the world's schemes. The world tempts us, promising more appealing or more successful alternatives to the means of grace. The world also hates us, calling into question whether the means of grace are sufficient for our survival. Surely there is a more strategic way to strengthen and spread churches in such a world than to call for more devotion to these ordinary means... We don't think so.

We believe we should bank everything on these ordinary means with joy *because of what faith is*.

If our faith is what overcomes the world (1 John 5:4), and if our faith seizes the treasure of Christ *through* the ordinary means of grace, then may nothing distract us from that devotion! Our conference aims to fill up our faithful devotion to these ordinary means of grace by proclaiming what biblical faith is: The Faith that Finds the Treasure. We believe the churches who will overcome the world are those whose faith held fast to this treasure through earnest devotion to the ordinary means of grace.

Today's Schedule

Bold items are located in the main sanctuary

8:00 9:00... Registration, breakfast, and fellowship

9:00 9:15... Welcome and singing

9:15 10:15... Session 1: "Extraordinary Faith Created by Ordinary Means"

10:15 10:30... Break w/ singing

10:30 11:30... Session 2: "Extraordinary Faith Satisfied by Ordinary Means"

11:30 1:00... Lunch Break

1:00 2:00... Breakout sessions (see page 5)

2:00 2:15... Regathering and singing

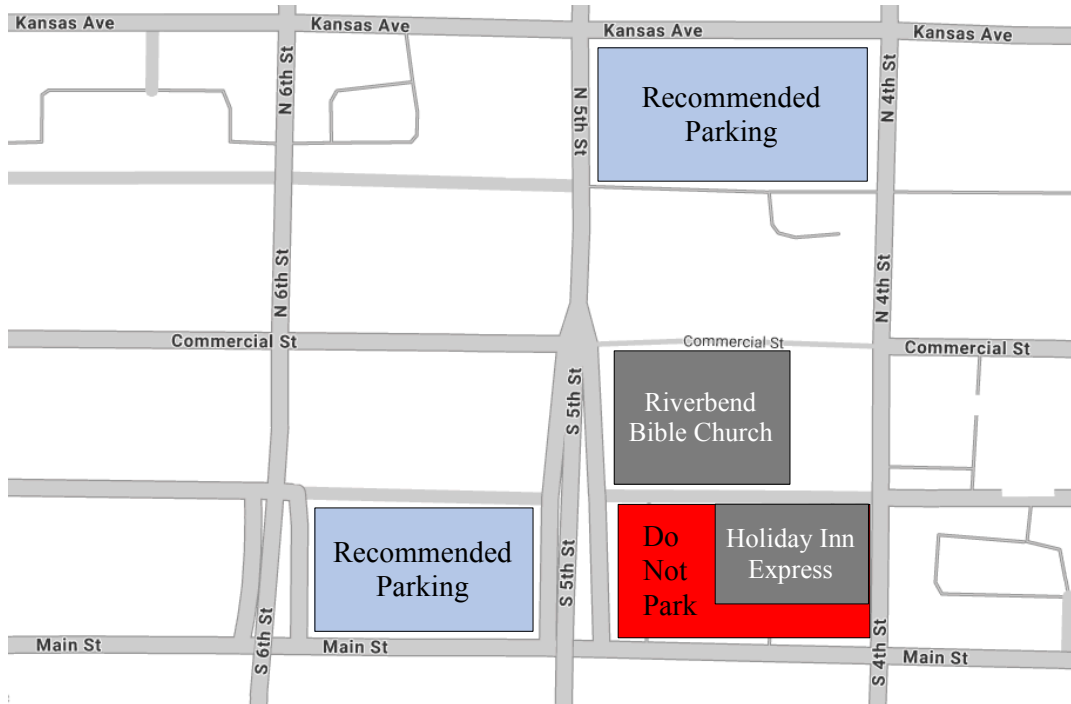
2:15 3:15... Session 3: "Extraordinary Faith Advanced by Ordinary Means"

3:15 3:30... Regathering and singing

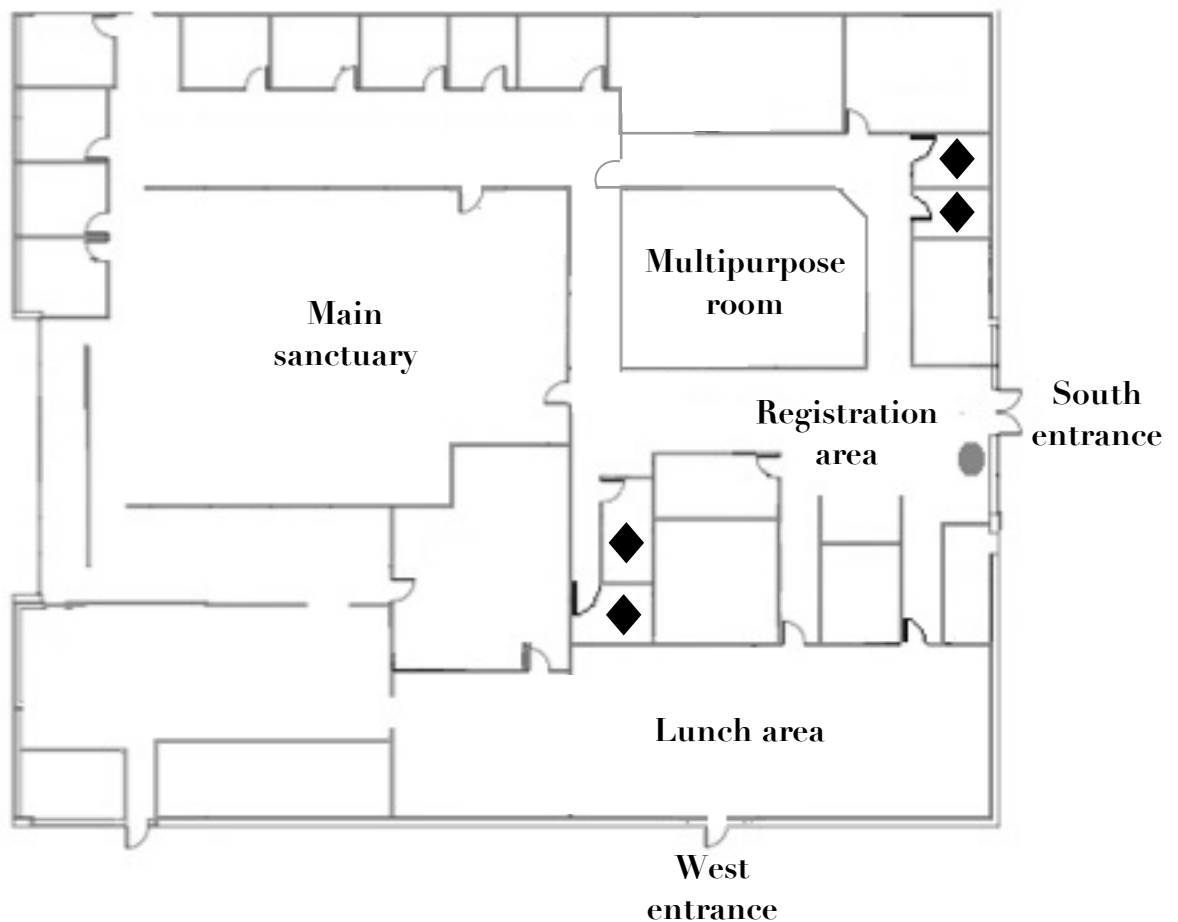
3:30 4:30... Session 4: "Extraordinary Faith Guarded by Ordinary Means"

4:30... Closing announcements and concluding songs

Please do not park in the Holiday Inn Express parking lot marked below.



Note the building map and restrooms indicated by black diamonds below.



About today's book: *Habits of Grace*

Below is an excerpt of a book review by Tim Challies

Full article at www.challies.com/book-reviews/habits-of-grace/

“One element I found especially valuable in Mathis’ approach is its simplicity. By narrowing all the habits or disciplines into just three means of grace he makes these practices seem possible, even for those for whom this is new territory. Where many books can seem overwhelming, Mathis says ‘My prayer is that you will not come away exasperated that you simply don’t have time to put into practice all that this book commends. Rather, in its very structure, the book aims to help you see how realistic and life-giving it can be to integrate God’s means of grace into daily habits of life.’ In that regard he succeeds well. This book really could set you up for a lifetime of enjoying God through the means he provides. Mathis also succeeds in giving new enthusiasm to those of us who already have well-established patterns of participating in each of these means of grace. I read the Bible and pray daily; I am committed to my church and heavily involved in it. Yet *Habits of Grace* still challenged me to continue to grow in each of these ways. The biblical support was challenging and the practical tips were illuminating. Both gave me ideas and information for modifying and improving my commitment to those all-important means of grace.”



Read the full article here

Breakout Sessions

Faith-Filling Discipleship w/ Brandon Tackett Main Sanctuary

What should discipleship look like in a church? Is it scheduled, structured, one-on-one meetings with lots of study, teaching, and prayer? Or is it spontaneous, free-flowing interactions that overflow throughout everyday life? When we aim for *faith-filling* discipleship, we choose both. They are like two pedals on the same bicycle. On one hand, faith is filled by deliberate attention: studying the Word, learning, confessing sin, challenging one another. Faith is filled by intentionally spending time in the ordinary means of grace together. But since it is *faith* that we are filling—not just our minds—it must also be lived out in our everyday life. When faith is full, it moves into others' lives with love and holiness and service, discipling them by example. Come discuss how to disciple with both pedals in your church from the faith-filling words of 2 John.

Faith-Filling Prayer w/ Bob Flack Multipurpose Room

Paul commanded the Christians at Rome to “be constant in prayer” (Romans 12:12). Christians know such advice is more easily offered than obeyed. Consistent, constructive praying is a difficult discipline to develop. But the Lord has not left us to fail. This breakout session will demonstrate for you the practice of praying Scripture and a practical tool to help you, in Jesus's words, “always to pray and not lose heart” (Luke 18:1). Come and find encouragement to model this means of grace in your church.

Faith-Filling Worship Services w/ Joe Bridgman Lunch Area

Does your faith get everything it should out of your church's worship services? Do you often walk away dissatisfied, wishing your worship service did more for you? And is the problem your expectations or your church's worship service? God's Word can help. God has not left us on our own to discover the most gratifying worship experience we can imagine. His Word actually guides us, because he is the one seeking out worshipers to worship him in spirit and truth (John 4:23-24). We will look in God's Word for guidance on what kind of worship fills our God-given faith and what kind of worship only gratifies our flesh-driven desires. My aim is to help us grow in our appreciation of how worship services filled with the ordinary means of grace can fill up our faith.

Session 3 Notes:

“Extraordinary Faith Advanced by Ordinary Means”

List the churches represented in your group:

1. Pray for *repentance* in these churches from worldly treasures:

Less distracted by selfish, divisive preferences Rom. 14:13-19

Less distracted by visible, man-made success Rev. 3:15-19

2. Pray for *faith* in these churches to find the treasure:

More faith to find the Lord through his means of grace John 5:39-40

More faith to find his Word a satisfying foundation Psalm 19:7-11

More faith to find prayer an empowering priority Acts 4:23-31

More faith to find fellowship a strengthening necessity Heb. 10:24-25

3. Pray for *love* in these churches to spread the treasure:

More love for Christ to serve him in a hateful world John 17:14-18

More love for one another to attract lost neighbors John 13:34-35

More love to pray for and witness to lost neighbors Eph. 6:18-20

Continued Fellowship Opportunities

Take a new friend to dinner at a nearby restaurant

- La Maria Mexican 801 Commercial Street
- Lopez De Mexico 112 S 6th Street
- Paolucci's 113 S 3rd Street
- Pete's Steak House 618 Commercial Street
- Willie's Sports Bar 701 Commercial Street
- Multiple fast food options!

Enroll in an e-mail list

- Receive prayer and support updates for the Agros Fellowship
- Receive event reminders for the Agros Fellowship
- E-mail director@agrosfellowship.com to enroll

Express interest in the Agros Fellowship or an internship

- The Agros Fellowship meets quarterly for fellowship and supports local churches with pulpit supply
- Internships adapt ministry training to your location and situation
- E-mail director@agrosfellowship.com to learn more

Request pulpit supply

- The Agros Fellowship organizes pulpit supply for churches without pastors and for pastors in need of respite
- Email director@agrosfellowship.com with requests

Consider attending an upcoming Agros workshop

- 4-8-hour practical training events that focus on various aspects of gospel ministry
- Visit agrosfellowship.com/events to see past and upcoming events, or enroll in the fellowship event reminder e-mail list