

# Letter from Craig



It was the summer of 2011. Benjamin was ten at the time. The sun was setting as we walked through a beanfield just north of Harrison Street between what would become 195th and 198th Streets. I prayed this was the ground the church would one day call home. Seeds of beans and corn were planted in the rich Nebraska dirt and satisfied people's hunger for decades. I thought about a different type of seed that would be planted: The love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the power of the Holy Spirit. People's hunger for a place to belong, meaning in life, the opportunity to be part of something bigger than ourselves, and the forgiveness of sin—they would be the new food.

I noticed the highest point of the property. I dreamed of a place where people could walk, sit, reflect, learn, and pray. Something unique happens in nature. In our busy, loud, crowded, and distracted world, a place is needed for stillness, solitude, rest, and prayer.

Jesus knew something about walking and quiet and praying. *Early in the morning, Jesus got up, left the house, and went to a solitary place, where he prayed.* -Mark 1:35

Most of the time, after Jesus finished praying, he did extraordinary things. May that be our story, too. And I remember the words of one of the prophets: *Stand at the crossing, and consider the ancient path, for it is good and it leads to Me. Walk on this path, and you will find rest for your souls.* -Jeremiah 6:16



It's hard to believe that night was 13 years ago. The kid lives in Washington, D.C., nowadays. The beanfield has a building on it. A parking lot and a park, too. A wooden cross, made from a single tree, stands at the highest point on the property and is the pinnacle of the prayer path. Last year, during the construction of the expansion, the prayer path was graded and installed. A patio was built. The steel firepit, which doubles as a globe, rests on the Nebraska flagstone. The prayer path is a journey from the world to the cross and back to the world again.

This year, a dozen benches will be installed. There will be a picnic table where people can have dinner with Jesus. Almost one-hundred varieties of plants and grasses. Over a dozen trees. Many are from the Bible. It will be quite the place that people will come from all over to experience.

On many Sundays after worship, we will have prayer guides to help us reflect on what we just experienced and prepare for the week. Married couples will be given resources to sit on the benches, have meaningful discussions, and pray together. Devotions and guides will be provided for families with young children, people in recovery, teenagers, and people needing things like forgiveness, hope, and purpose. The possibilities are endless.

I invite you to read about the prayer path in the following pages and pray about your financial participation. Together, WE will bless the future of our church and community.

In Christ,

Craig