



SANDIA FELLOWSHIP WEEKLY NEWS

October 8, 2026

Lessons from Jonestown

*Those Who Do Not Remember the Past
are Condemned to Repeat It.*

Looking back, it's haunting to realize those words were affixed to a pavilion in Jonestown when the tragic events of November 18, 1978 occurred, the day when Jim Jones ordered 900+ people to their deaths. I've been fascinated by the story for decades. I was just a child when it happened, but I remember learning about it later and wondering: What would cause people to blindly follow someone who ended up destroying them?



Rev. Jim Jones didn't start off as a madman. Peoples Temple was part of a mainline Christian denomination and the church was well-respected. Politicians of that era actively sought Jones' support. People flocked to hear the young charismatic pastor and the gospel music of Peoples Temple was legendary. But he became intoxicated with the adulation of the masses, and little by little, Jones began

shifting allegiance from God to himself, before finally dropping all pretense of Christianity altogether and openly espousing atheism.

But there were flashing warning signs along the way. By the 1970s, Jones was explicitly declaring he'd been "selected to be God." Peoples Temple altered hymns redirecting worship to Jones. And the people sang them. Their love for "Father" grew more important than their love for God. They "exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator" (Romans 1:25).

It's shocking really. They exchanged the true God who could heal (unlike Jones' manufactured "healings") for a totalitarian dictator who robbed them of their health. They exchanged the living God who offers abundant life and freedom to instead become enslaved in a hot and humid smelly jungle compound, working 12-hour shifts under the boiling sun under threat of harsh punishment. Meals consisted of watery rice and gravy. A place with sanitation so terrible, dysentery ran rampant and people were constantly sick. They willingly sold all they owned, gave it all to Jones, and boarded planes to Guyana where Jones promised a utopian "Promised Land." It was anything but.

But the story of Jonestown was in a sense foretold by Jesus. He warned that Satan comes to steal, kill, and destroy. The overarching lesson of Jonestown is this is what happens when we allow anything to take the place of God in our lives. Idolatry always steals from us. It never delivers the promised goods. Promising life, it instead delivers death.

Perhaps the most sobering lesson of Jonestown is that deception often begins with a kernel of truth. Many intelligent and sincere people were caught up in Peoples Temple, people who just wanted to do good. No one ever wakes up and says, "Gee, today I think I'll walk away from Christianity, join a cult and destroy my life." It's a slippery slope of tiny compromises. "The human heart is a perpetual idol factory," wrote John Calvin. This is the warning of Jonestown: guard your heart, test everything against Scripture, and never surrender to anyone or anything the place that belongs to God alone.

So, how does someone fall into the tragedy we know as Jonestown? It wasn't one moment. It was a slow transfer of allegiance, the temperature rising one degree at a time. Like the frog in the boiling kettle, the compromises can be so gradual that a person barely recognizes them. By the time many people in Jonestown realized where the treacherous path had led, they were completely trapped with no way to escape.

That is why we must guard our hearts while everything is still quiet, long before the kettle ever begins to boil.

Blessings,
Holly Klein
Director of Communications



CURRENT SERMON SERIES

OUR GREAT *Inheritance*

A STUDY THROUGH GALATIANS

SAVED BY GRACE.
MADE NEW IN CHRIST.
HEIRS OF HIS PROMISES.
THAT IS OUR INHERITANCE.

"SO THEN, YOU ARE NO LONGER A SLAVE, BUT A SON,
AND IF A SON, THEN AN HEIR THROUGH GOD."
GALATIANS 4:7

MESSAGE FOR THIS SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11
"Let Us Not Lose Heart" (Galatians 6:1-10)

We are continuing our sermon series through the book of Galatians, titled "Our Great Inheritance." This coming Sunday, we will be looking at Galatians 6:1-10 with a focus on overcoming discouragement and not becoming weary as we face the great variety of challenges in our efforts to be faithful disciples of Christ.



FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP DIRECTOR UPDATE

We are so thankful to everyone who has responded to the call to help seed the first-year salary for our new staff position of Family Discipleship Director!

The total gifts so far total **\$101,250.00**, with more than **\$5,000** committed in the days to come (through January). There were over **26** family/individual giving "units" that gave to the FDD position.

If you'd like to participate, you still can! If anyone would like to take advantage of a tax-free IRA donation, we would welcome that as well. Those donations can extend into January of next year, if needed.



BUILDING UPDATE AND CALL TO PRAYER

On September 27 at the end of my message, I issued a “Call to Prayer” related to the obstacles and recent roadblocks we have been experiencing in the final stages of completing the renovation of our new church building. Personally, I have sensed that this may be a form of spiritual warfare, and I have had a strong impression that the “ball is in our court” when it comes to addressing these challenges through congregational prayer.

The challenge I mentioned in the message is also related to what some of us may experience as an addiction to our phones and the many apps and distractions they provide. I am challenging us to refrain from using our phones during the first and last hour of each day and to use part of that time to pray specifically for the completion of our building renovation and for preparation for the next steps in fulfilling our call to discipleship.

I am also inviting anyone who is experiencing spiritual benefits from this particular call to prayer—a kind of fasting from our mobile devices—to email me here and share how this practice has been helpful to you. I would love to hear how God is using this simple discipline to deepen your prayer life and draw you closer to Him.



SANDIA FELLOWSHIP GOLF GATHERING

Join us the first and third Thursdays of each month for a round of 9 holes! We meet at Arroyo del Oso Dam 9 at 9:30 AM. Our next date is Thursday, October 15 at 9:30 AM. Please RSVP TODAY by clicking [here](#) and provide us your contact information.



MEN'S BREAKFAST

Our Men's Breakfast meets this upcoming Tuesday, October 13 at 7:00 AM at Sunnyside Up (6909 Menaul Blvd NE). All are welcome!



WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

Our monthly Women's Fellowship Breakfast meets this upcoming Tuesday, October 13 at 9:00 AM at Dave's High Desert Grill (5200 Eubank Blvd NE). Reservations are helpful but not required. Please email Linda Hess [here](#).

Visit our LIFE Groups page to learn more about the various LIFE Groups
Sandia Fellowship offers: www.sandiagmc.org/life-groups.



NEED ASSISTANCE WITH HEARING AT CHURCH?

If you are needing assistance with hearing, please download the **Listen Everywhere** app on your cell phone.

When you arrive at our service, please connect to our Wi-Fi. The password is: 17x9c9s0ua.

On your hearing aid, make sure your Bluetooth is turned on. If you do not want to use the app on your phone, we have two devices available. It has a headphone that goes over your ear and you can adjust the volume on the provided phone. Please ask an usher if you need one of these devices.



THERE'S A LIFE GROUP FOR YOU!

Sandia Fellowship has several LIFE Groups regularly meeting in homes throughout Albuquerque, as well as two that meet in local restaurants:

Tramway Group: This LIFE Group meets every first and third Wednesday from 7:00-8:00 PM. Contact: **Ed Boucheron**

Northeast Group: This LIFE Group meets every first and third Wednesday from 7:00-8:00 PM. Contact: **Tim Ownbey**

Women's Group: This LIFE Group meets every second and fourth Saturday at 10:00 AM at the church offices (2609 Texas St NE). Contact: **Lindy Rech**

"The Story" Group: This LIFE Group meets every first and third Monday from 12:00-1:00 PM at the church offices. Contact: **Pastor John**

"The Chosen" Interactive Bible Study Group: This LIFE Group meets seasonally using an interactive guide that follows along with the popular TV series. The group meets on Tuesday evenings from 6:30-8:00 PM at the church offices (2609 Texas St NE). Contact: **Gina Rivera**

Men's Breakfast: This group meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays at 7:00 AM at Sunnyside Up (6909 Menaul Blvd). Contact: **Ed Boucheron**

Women's Breakfast: This group meets the second Tuesday of each month at 9:00 AM at Dave's High Desert Grill (5200 Eubank Blvd). Contact: **Linda Hess**

All of these groups welcome new members! If you're interested in information about any of these, please contact the person listed or send an email to the church **here**.

Visit our **LIFE Groups page** on our website to learn more!

DEADLINE

FOR

newsletter submissions



Items must be submitted by **TUESDAY** morning at **10 AM** in order to be included in the weekly newsletter which is published every **THURSDAY**.



Email submissions to → hklein@sandiagmc.org

⇒ Thank you! ⇒



VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

Have you visited our website lately? There's always fresh content being added: [announcements](#) and church news, current [sermons](#) as well as [past sermon series](#), weekly [newsletters](#), and more.

You can also [submit a prayer request](#), learn about our various [Life Groups](#), read about the [missionaries and outreaches](#) we support, set up [online giving](#), learn more about the [mission and vision](#) of Sandia Fellowship as well as the [Global Methodist Church](#), and so much more!

Bookmark our site and check back regularly!

www.sandiagmc.org



SEND US YOUR PRAYER REQUESTS!

Sandia Fellowship has a dedicated Prayer Ministry that intercedes weekly for various needs and requests. The Apostle Paul wrote, "**Do not be anxious about anything**, but in **everything** by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving **let your requests be made known to God**. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7)

There is no prayer need "too small" or "too big" for the Lord. If our hearts are burdened by anything, God wants us to bring it to Him in prayer -- and He promises us His peace when we do.

You can submit a prayer request in one of three ways:

- Send a request through our **website** or click the red button below.
- Email us at **prayer@sandiagmc.org**.
- Fill out a **Prayer Request card** available at the Welcome Tables on Sunday mornings.

If you'd like to be a part of this Prayer Ministry, please email Holly at hklein@sandiamc.org.

SUBMIT YOUR PRAYER REQUEST HERE



Childcare is available for ages six months through five years old.





SANDIA FELLOWSHIP YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Did you know you can subscribe to the Sandia Fellowship YouTube channel? All of our weekly sermons are uploaded to our YouTube channel [here](#) as well as on our [website](#).

Search [@sandiafellowship](#) on YouTube (or just click the photo).



This exciting venture in faith would not be possible without God moving upon the hearts of people to give towards this work. Your generosity helps create a church where we can bear witness to the transforming power of the Gospel. The mission of Sandia Fellowship is to make disciples of Jesus Christ who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly. We strive to humbly serve others as ambassadors of Christ.

Click [HERE](#) to give safely and securely online.

NOTE: Donations can be made to either the **General Budget** or the **Building Fund** by choosing from the dropdown menu. You can also make a donation to our monthly **Communion Offerings** via the dropdown.

Checks can also be mailed to:

Sandia Fellowship GMC
P.O. Box 16702
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87191



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