





WELCOMING  
EVERYONE TO A  
BIGGER TABLE.

**THE  
CORNER**

uhbc.org  

SUNDAY MORNING LIFE GROUPS - 9:15AM  
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP - 10:30AM  
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY - 6PM

**NEWS FROM UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH**

(a CBF/ABC Church)

**CRITER**

**Sept 2025**

## Authentic Faith in Anxious Times

We live in an age of deep anxiety. Everywhere we turn, the headlines are heavy, the conversations around us are divided, and the pace of life leaves us restless and exhausted. Many of us carry worry about our families, our work, our health, and the future of our nation. In times like these, it is tempting to cling to whatever promises security, even if it is only an illusion.

Cultural Christianity has long told us that being a “good person,” showing up at church occasionally, or identifying with a religious label is enough. In recent years, Christian nationalism has gone even further, confusing allegiance to Jesus with allegiance to a political agenda. It equates following Christ with preserving power, rather than laying down our lives in love. Both cultural Christianity and Christian nationalism promise security, but neither delivers authentic faith.

Authentic faith is not about fear, power, or control. It is about Jesus. It is about the God who in Christ took on flesh, walked with the poor, challenged the proud, and loved the least and the lost. To follow Jesus in anxious times means refusing to let fear or nationalism set the agenda for our hearts. Instead, we live into the call of the Sermon on the Mount: peacemaking, mercy, humility, hunger for justice, and love of neighbor.

What does that look like in practice? It looks like being a people of prayer—anchoring our restless minds in the peace of Christ that surpasses understanding. It looks like being a people of courage—willing to speak truth to power, but always with gentleness and grace. It looks like being a people of service—meeting real needs in our neighborhoods, schools, and community without seeking recognition or control. It looks like being a people of hope—trusting that even when the world trembles, God’s kingdom cannot be shaken.

In anxious times, the church’s witness matters more than ever. Not a witness of fear or division, but of deep, steady faith in Jesus. My prayer is that we will be that kind of people—authentic, Christ-shaped, rooted in love, and shining with the light of God’s peace in a fractured world.

**Pastor's  
Corner**

**-Pastor Nolan**

# Youth Ministry

## Youth Ministry Update

*From the Pastor*

**Church Family,**

As we step into this new season of youth ministry together, I want to begin by giving thanks. For the past three years, Lisa Porter has poured her heart, energy, and creativity into leading our youth ministry. She has walked alongside our students in faith, laughter, questions, and growth, and we are grateful for the foundation she has built and the growth we have experienced. Her influence continues to ripple through our students, and we celebrate her faithful service with deep appreciation.

As many of you know, we have been prayerfully and earnestly searching for Lisa's successor. While we have looked carefully, we have not yet found the right person to step into this important role. We believe that finding the right fit for our church and for our students matters more than finding a quick replacement, and so we continue to wait and pray and search.

In the meantime, our students are still being well cared for and guided. Pastor Joe, as well as Tina, are faithfully leading our Wednesday night gatherings, helping students engage scripture and faith in meaningful ways. On Sunday mornings, parents and leaders are stepping in to teach—Kelbi Schlueter continuing every other week and others sharing in rotation—ensuring that our young people continue to be nurtured by the broader church family. I will also be spending intentional time with students, particularly at special events, so that they know their pastor is invested in their lives and growth.

The mentorship program Lisa began continues strong, connecting students with caring adults who walk with them in faith. This one-on-one discipleship remains a vital piece of helping our young people know they are seen, known, and loved by God and their church.

In this interim season, I want to encourage you—students, parents, and church family alike—to lean in with participation and commitment. Show up. Be engaged. Pray for our students and their families. And pray that God will guide us to the right person who will step into this role with vision, energy, and love for our young people.

Our youth are not just the church of tomorrow—they are the church of today. Let's surround them with encouragement, consistency, and faithfulness in this season of transition.

With gratitude and hope,

**-Pastor Nolan**



# Back to School, Back to the Beginning!

This month, as kids returned to school and started a brand-new year, we also jumped into the very beginning of *God's Big Story* in Kids Ministry. Every story has a beginning, and in August we explored Creation and the Fall.

The kids discovered that God created everything with purpose—and even when people chose to go their own way, God already had a plan to bring restoration. We also looked at Abram's call and the lives of Jacob and Joseph, seeing how God faithfully worked through their stories to point toward the ultimate fulfillment of His promise in Jesus.

Wednesday nights in August were full of fun, laughter, and friendship! On August 6th, Jay Miller (shout out to Jay for helping out!) joined the kids, Miss Lisa, and the youth for some action-packed outdoor games. The following week, on August 13th, we celebrated with our Annual Back to School Bash, complete with food trucks, a giant water slide, and plenty of outdoor table games.

August 20th wrapped up our Summer of Fun with even more outdoor adventures and games alongside the youth, giving kids one last chance to enjoy the season together. On August 27th, we kicked off our regular Wednesday night programming, allowing kids to settle into our usual routines while continuing to make friends and have fun. These evenings weren't just about games—they were a wonderful opportunity for kids to make new friends, strengthen existing friendships, and enjoy time together and with the older kids in youth.

## A Heartfelt Goodbye... For Now

As August comes to a close, we want to celebrate Lisa Porter. While she isn't leaving our church, she will be stepping away from ministry at the end of this month. I'll truly miss working alongside her, attending conferences together, and sharing all the highs (and occasional chaos!) of ministry.

Her heart for students, creativity, and passion for God's work has been such a blessing. Please join us in praying for her, thanking God for her faithful service, and celebrating the impact she's made on our kids and youth.

## Back-to-School Support

Starting a new school year is exciting—but it can also feel overwhelming, scary, or just plain tiring for kids. Talking about worries, encouraging them to share their feelings, and praying together can make a big difference. Even a short prayer in the morning or at bedtime reminds them that God is with them every step of the way.

By seeing how God has worked in the past, our kids are learning to trust that He is still at work today, in their lives, in our church family, and in everyone who follows Jesus.

## PARENT CONNECTION



### Prayers to share with your kids:

- Dear God, please help me have a great day at school, and help me remember You are always with me.
- God, thank you for my friends and teachers. Please help me be kind and brave today.
- Lord, when I feel worried or tired, help me trust that you are taking care of me.

### Family Activity:

Take a walk outside together and see how many different things you can name that God created — trees, clouds, bugs, birds, even each other! End by thanking God for His creation and for making a plan to care for us.



**TIP:** Even a quick chat at dinner, in the car, or before bed can remind kids that God's story isn't just in the Bible — it's happening in their lives too.



### Here are a few questions to chat about at home:

- "What was your favorite part of the Creation story?"
- "How did God take care of Abram, Jacob, or Joseph?"
- "Which Wednesday night activity did you enjoy the most, and why?"
- "What's one thing you're a little nervous about at school this year?"

**-Heather Twibell, Children's Pastor**

**Children's  
Ministry**

# News and Notes

## Welcome to this Summer's New Members!

The Sirb family—**Aaron, Rebecca, and Suzana** — joined our church family on July 20. Welcome to all of you!



**Joan Baker** joined us on June 4. Joan was a former UHBC member who moved away for a number of years and has now found her way “home.” Welcome back, Joan!



**Eric, Sarah, and Josephine Sharp** joined UHBC on July 27. Eric and Sarah have been active in the “Friends for the Journey” life group, and Josephine is involved in the youth group. Welcome to the Sharps!



**To the amazing folks at UHBC,**

*We're just blown away and ever so grateful to have learned about the super generous donation that was made to the school. Not only did this take a lot of time, planning, and \$\$ to put together but moreover, you spared us, the exhausted parents, from having to endure the annual ritual of back to school supply shopping! Thank you so much for giving us all a little extra time this summer as we prepare for another school year back at Rountree. We appreciate your long-standing, intentional, thoughtful, and God-honoring spirit in our neighborhood and community. Your church and the members within it exemplify the spirit and service that Christ calls us to offer. We feel the love from you all!*

*From the Mailbag*

**-Scott & Katrina Sturm**

# News and Notes

What a wonderful opportunity we all have to reach out to our homebound members who are long-term members that previously were able to be active and serve our Lord and our church well. Our Homebound Board (by the Church Parlor) has pre-addressed and stamped cards for you to send to our homebound members. All it takes is to pick one or a few up and write a prayerful note of compassion and greeting. Whether you know them or not, the blessing of hearing from our church family lifts their spirit, assures them they are still an important part of our church family, and are loved. These testimonies from two of our homebound members share how one of our own youth members, Zoe Roberts, has touched their hearts through her personal ministry to our homebound.



**Frankie Beavers**

"I have been at Glendale Gardens for over a year now and feel happy. Watching our church service every Sunday makes me miss my church family; however, the many visits, phone calls, cards and flowers help to make me still feel a part of the church community. It is truly special.

"Last Sunday I had a nice surprise when Norma Jones brought Zoe Roberts from the youth group to see me.

"I had received several cards from Zoe but had never met her. Zoe is such a smart and beautiful girl. We had a nice visit. It really made my day.

"With a grateful heart, I thank each of you for making me feel included."

"I want to thank my caring older and young new friends at UHBC for the many cards and notes of encouragement that make me still feel a part of my church. A special thank you to Zoe Roberts for cards and a visit, which made me feel special. What a lovely young lady! Also, I want to thank Teresa MacAlmon for bringing the Lord's Supper to me."



**Wilda Rosse**

Voices From Our Homebound

We have more than 30 Back-to-School type books for young children. These include themes of learning the alphabet, colors, numbers, and telling time.

# News and Notes

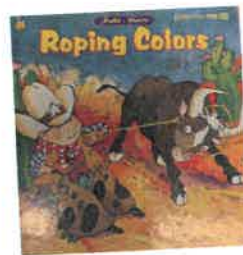
## Learning Colors books include:

- \* Penguins Love Colors
- \* Roping Colors
- \* Color Crunch
- \* Hello Kitty, Hello Color
- \* White Rabbit's Color Book
- \* I Went Walking



## ABCs books include:

- \* ABCs of Hawaii
  - \* My Little Book of ABCs
  - \* My Spiritual Alphabet Book
  - \* Bob and Larry's ABCs
  - \* Cat in the Hat's ABCs
  - \* Norman Rockwell's Americana ABC
  - \* Mickey's Alphabet Soup
  - \* Berenstain's Alphabet Book
- and many others*



## Books to help learn counting, shapes, words, and telling time

- \* Let's Learn Shapes, Sizes, and Opposites
- \* Let's Learn Counting
- \* Let's Learn Words
- \* Spelling Bee Magnetic Read and Spell Book
- \* It's About Time
- \* Just a Minute!



*-Submitted by Jeanetta Chrystie*



# MISSIONS & MINISTRY



## Mission Group Joint Meeting

Tuesday, September 9, 1pm, Fellowship Hall

Sonja and Randy Baldwin will bring fresh-cut flowers from the garden at their Craig Hollow Farm in Highland. We will need to bring pint jars or vases to make our own bouquets. We can even give them a donation for the flowers. Each person can use their bouquet to decorate their own home or share it with a homebound friend. Sonja and Randy will sing a couple of songs and share how mission trips they went on strengthened their faith.

## Special Regional Missions Offering for September

The Mission Board goal is \$5,000.

Contributions to be divided equally between:

CBF-Heartland, ABC Great Rivers Region, Grand Oak Mission, and U-Hope.

## Your Mission Offerings at Work



CBF Heartland helps college students in summer mission placements. The Student.Go program provides for students to gain hands-on experience in cross-cultural services. The Student.Church program provides internships to those who are interested in a deeper experience of church life or pursuing a call to ministry.



A young mother was very carefully selecting baby clothes at stressed. After several "promptings from the Spirit," the worker went to the children's area to visit with her. She had new triplet babies. The father had left her without any support. Someone had told her she could get some help for each of her babies and that she could do that once each month, she said with tears streaming down her face. "I think I can make it."



Over a six-month period this year, University Hope has focused on ministering to the local community by addressing transportation needs. It has provided 3,000 bus passes and over \$6,000 in assistance to 32 individuals to help with car repairs and diagnostic testing.



ABC Great Rivers Region supports Blackhawk Baptist Camp in Northern Illinois. It is always working place to reach out to tell others about Jesus. Mission offerings help replace aging and too-small equipment like refrigerators and freezers.



# What's Happening?



- |                              |                              |                        |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>1 Shawn Vomund</b>        | <b>12 Tandi Edelman</b>      | <b>21 Rick White</b>   |
| <b>3 Maria Grindstaff</b>    | <b>Lin Gray</b>              | <b>25 Dana Newman</b>  |
| <b>4 Stephanie Albritton</b> | <b>13 Rosemarie Prickett</b> | <b>28 Romona Baker</b> |
| <b>5 Robert Todd</b>         | <b>13 Lydia Schlueter</b>    | <b>Becky Matthews</b>  |
| <b>9 Clif Smart</b>          | <b>15 Justin Jennings</b>    | <b>29 Gary Schafer</b> |
| <b>10 David Miller</b>       | <b>18 Roger Kirchner</b>     | <b>Norma Jones</b>     |
| <b>Jeremy Pruitt</b>         | <b>20 Jayden Carney</b>      | <b>30 Pat Wolf</b>     |
|                              | <b>Cynthia Hogan</b>         |                        |

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> Labor Day— Office Closed	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> <b>NEW TIMES</b> 5:45 Supper 6:30 Bible Study Kids/Youth 6:45 Chancel Choir	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 9:15 Life Groups 10:30 Worship & Communion After Worship— How to Lead a Small Group	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 1pm M&M Meeting	<b>10</b> 5:45 Supper 6:30 Bible Study Kids/Youth 6:45 Chancel Choir	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 9:15 Wi-Fi 9:15 Life Groups 10:30 Worship	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 5:30 Bell Choir 5:45 Supper 6:30 Bible Study Kids/Youth 6:45 Chancel Choir	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 9:15 Life Groups 10:30 Worship	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 5:30 Bell Choir 5:45 Supper 6:30 Bible Study Kids/Youth 6:45 Chancel Choir	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 9:15 Life Groups 10:30 Worship 4pm Board Mtgs	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>September 2025</b>			



"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way..." Isaiah 43:19

## New Things

Almost two years ago on one of our regular Sunday morning gatherings, the college students and I read and discussed the early church movement from Acts chapter 2. We decided to break them into smaller groups as they looked at the passage and then shared their observations with the larger group. As each group shared, there were common themes and practices that grabbed their attention - selflessness, togetherness, love, community, etc. It was in that moment, the group decided who we would be. We would strive to be a community who practiced selflessness,

connection, action, service, generosity, and learning. This who they wanted to be as a group and the values they wanted to rally around.

Many of those first students had just graduated high school in the spring of 2023 and they have set the tone for current and future ministry to college students through UHBC. As a group we try to revisit those values and reimagine who we are becoming and the new ways God might do good with us in 2025. As we move forward this semester we have changed some things:

1. Monday Night Bible Study - Andrew Albritton began a Monday night Bible study on campus in the spring semester and we are continuing that moving forward. On Sunday's we plan to do breakfast at 9:45 as a casual hang-out time hoping to connect and just be present. We hope every student can make it to Monday nights, but we also know that is not always reality. On Mondays we plan to add a once a quarter worship experience and periodic activities like Andy's Frozen Custard, Pizza, and game nights. Student life is flexible, so we want to be flexible.
2. UHBC Young Adults - We have decided to call our group "UHBC Young Adults" simply because there are some in our group that are no longer students, and we wanted to make sure they felt like they were included. As we talked about this, we wanted to cast a wider net creating space for those who are in a similar stage of life.

## Praying For Changes & Newness

I am excited about these changes and look forward to seeing what new thing God is bringing about with this group of young people. I look forward to the new faces we will meet and the new challenges ahead. As I pray for them, I pray we would be a people built on the person and work of Jesus. I pray we would live out selflessness, community, connection, action, service, and generosity. I pray we would be a place for people who don't think there is a place for them. I pray for our church as we embrace new faces and new days ahead!

Blessings,

-Joe

Wake Up  
and Smell  
the Coffee

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH

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Senior Pastor,  
Dr. Nolan B. Porter

University Heights  
Baptist Church



Affiliated with  
Cooperative Baptist  
Fellowship & the  
American Baptist  
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*A Church of Thoughtful, Gentle Grace*

Give us a call for more information about our services and ministries. 417-862-0789 or visit our website: [www.uhbc.org](http://www.uhbc.org). or email us at [uhbc@uhbc.org](mailto:uhbc@uhbc.org).