

UPCOMING SERMONS

September 7 (Pastor Mario)

Christ Calls Us to Live as Family
Ephesians 2:11-22

This is the last sermon of our series: The People We Meet As We Walk With Jesus: How God Shows Himself in Our World.

September 14 we will begin a new series:
Where Do We Want To Go?

Pursuing the Best that God Has For Us

This series will last until Advent, Sunday, Nov. 30

September 14 (Pastor Scott)

God's Glory in the Ten Commandments
Exodus 20:1-21

September 21 (Pastor Scott)

God's New Covenant
Luke 22:7-23

September 28 (Pastor Mario)

The Greatest Commandment
Matthew 22:34-40

October 5 (Pastor Scott)

The Great Commission
Matthew 28:16-20

SECOND OFFERING SCHEDULE

Every Sunday the offering bags are passed twice. The first offering goes to The River Life (or General) Fund. This is for the normal operation of the church. The second offerings are designated for a special purpose or for one of our Kingdom Partners.

Sept 07: Benevolence

Sept 14: Christian Education Fund

Sept 21: Missions

Sept 28: Beautiful Gate

(see update on next page)

PASTOR SCOTT'S WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY TO BEGIN NEW SERIES ON REVELATION

Pastor Scott will begin a new study on Revelation at his noon Wednesday Bible study starting September 10. The sessions are every Wednesday, with some exceptions, and last about 90 minutes. Everyone is invited to attend. If you would like to participate but need a ride, please contact Rachel at the church office (909) 798-2221 or Pastor Rick at (909) 576-5214.

LEGACY NIGHT SCHEDULE

Legacy Nights meets the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month except when a holiday interrupts, such as in November and December. Dinner is served at 5:15 PM. The kids lead a brief time of worship at 6:00 PM then classes start at 6:15 PM.

There are two options for adults. One is a craft time led by Teri Heemstra. Teri's group will be meeting every Wednesday this year. The other is a study on Scripture led by Don Bueermann and David Oliver. They will be using material from Ray Vander Laan "whose approach focuses on the Jewishness of Jesus—not just for the sake of it—but to invite connections between the Old Testament and the New Testament that can lose their richness and flavor if people don't understand those allusions and deeper contexts." (See more on page 4.)

Seniors, if you don't drive at night but would like to participate, call Pastor Rick to see how we can make that happen.



FALL 2025

AUG	27
SEP	10 + 24
OCT	8 + 22
NOV	12
DEC	10

* HOLIDAY DATES
WILL BE OBSERVED
ON THE FOLLOWING

JOIN US ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS
FOR A FAMILY MEAL, SMALL GROUPS,
GEMS, CADETS + MORE!

FOR MORE INFO VISIT THERIVERCRC.UM

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

*New Office Bearers Selected, Budget Approved
New Staff Position Announced*

After Pastor Scott opened the meeting and Council President Jim Nydam made a few moving comments, new office-bearers were selected. As in past years, the method used was that the congregation was asked to vote to approve all the people on the slate, then names to fill the two vacant positions were selected "by lot." All the names were put into an offering bag and two were pulled for each office. Gerrit Wagner and Mark VanderWal were selected as elders, Roy Null and Jody Duncan as deacons. Gerrit, Roy, and Jody were immediately installed to their respective offices and prayed over. Mark was not present and will be installed at a later date. Pastor Scott thanked David Oliver and Randall Whitman, who were not selected, for their

Continued on next page....

Meeting continued from last page...

willingness to serve and have their names included in the process. The office-bearers who have completed their terms were thanked for their service: Jim Nydam and David Carnes, elders; Richard Smith and Sharon Greene, deacons.



The 2025-2026 Budget for \$885,804 was approved at the meeting. It includes \$557,304 for salaries and benefits; \$259,050 for non-payroll items; \$38,000 for the mission fund; and \$31,450 for the Christian Education Fund. There was some discussion about the CRCNA not being included in the annual budget, but ultimately the budget was approved as presented.

At the meeting, Pastor Scott announced that Karla Whitman, a member of our congregation, has been hired full time beginning September 1, to work with Pastor Mario to develop young adult ministry; improve and increase our social media presence;

work with Becca Triemstra, Director of Children's Ministry; and work with Jim Kouwe to learn the church's bookkeeping system and perhaps take over from Jim when he retires. Karla interned in the office over the last two summers.



In making the announcement, Pastor Scott took note of the seniors. He observed that the church is in a space where we want to increase our ministry with young adults while continuing to be sensitive to our seniors. One place that comes up is in technology. Most young-to-middle aged adults search the internet when they are looking for a church and use electronic media almost exclusively. On the other hand, many of our seniors do not use technology in a robust way and rely on print media. The church will continue to work to bridge this gap.

If you did not get a copy of the Congregational Meeting Packet and would still like to look it over, please contact Rachel at the front office (909) 798-2221 or Pastor Rick (909) 576-5214. In addition to what was mentioned here, there are reports from the pastor and staff as well as several other interesting pieces.

SEPTEMBER 28 MISSION OFFERING SUPPORTS BEAUTIFUL GATE ORPHANAGE IN LESOTHO

UPDATE FOR THE RIVER CHURCH REDLANDS,
A JOURNEY FROM SURVIVAL TO THRIVING
By Mrs. Lindiwe Kili Kirsten, Operations Director

Warm greetings to all our Beautiful Gate Lesotho (BGL) friends and family. In the last 18 months or so, BGL has found itself in a very challenging and trying season. Our financial situation has been in the red to an extent that we had to stop taking in new children and suspend/postpone some of our planned activities and projects. This situation is worsened by the existing adverse economic situation in the country whereby food and fuel prices keep escalating thus affecting our delivery service. We have basically been living from hand to mouth and operating in an emergency mode. Yet we do not despair but continue to trust in God to turn things around for us.

Currently, we have 63 children under our care, 34 Males (54%) and 29 Females (46%), ranging in age from 7 months to 15 years. Six of these have severe special needs and disabilities. We have 9 children in primary/elementary school; 14 in preschool and 28 in Playgroup.

HOW YOU CAN PRAY AND SUPPORT:

1) Turn-around of our financial situation: Our greatest and most urgent need is Child Care and Sponsorship that is continuous, i.e. on a monthly basis. The child sponsorship meets the everyday needs of the children, including food, clothes, toiletries, school/educational needs, medical needs, staff salaries and other administrative/operational expenses. Our monthly budget is M482,000 (US\$28,000). Currently, most of our donors are once-off donors; we need more regular donors. If things continue in this fashion, we might have to consider letting go of some staff, a measure that we would not

like to take at all, as we believe this will jeopardize our mission.

2) Children's placements with families: There have been challenges and delays with processes of placing children with families (either through reunification or adoption) and this has caused us to have more older children (over 6 years). We truly believe that it is God's desire for children to grow up in loving families. So please pray for prioritization and speeding up of children placements by relevant Government departments.

3) Pray for Seed money for Commercial Farming: At our second campus, we have started to run an agricultural farm for income generation but we are still doing it at a very small scale due to the fact that we don't have Seed money to do it on a bigger scale. We believe this would help us to move towards being financially sustainable and less reliant on donor-funding.

YOUR PRAYER SUPPORT AND GIVING IS LIFE-CHANGING; THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF OUR JOURNEY FROM SURVIVAL TO THRIVING!!!

SECOND ANNUAL BEAUTIFUL GATE WALK/RUN Saturday, November 8, 2025

By Jim Nydam

The second annual fundraiser for Beautiful Gate orphanage in Lesotho, Africa will be held on Nov. 8. The location of the event is the same as last year, the Carriage Trail in Redlands on Alessandro Rd. The Beautiful Run/Walk follows the free flowing stream of Live Oak Canyon which flows into Beverly's Pond. You will enjoy the sights and sounds of nature as you run or walk the trail. The Generosity and Outreach Team at The River is looking forward to seeing you at the starting line.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY PLANS UPCOMING EVENTS

By Karen Verhoeven

The River is excited to invite women of all ages to a new year of fun and fellowship! Two fall activities are planned by our leadership team, which includes Debbie Bueermann, Nicole DeKock, Kristin Elgersma, Nancy Ganther, Jess Hekman, Sarah Huibregtse, Melissa Lemm, Rachel Peters, Kathy Vander Wal & Karen Verhoeven.



Boards & Bunco is planned for Sunday, Sept. 21. It will be a fun afternoon (3-5pm) enjoying food, friends, and bunco. Bunco is an easy dice game played in a group of 4, rotating from table to table. Of course, we will have prizes! Please register online now. Also, bring a charcuterie board of any type (fruit, cheese, veggies, treats). Bring a friend along too!

Thrift in the Desert on Saturday, Nov. 15 from 9 AM-3 PM. We are shopping the thrift stores in Palm Desert, lunch at Long Horn Steakhouse, and more shopping if you want! We will organize groups in the morning from church and be given a list of stores for shopping (each store knows Debbie B. by name so you know they are good!) and then meeting for lunch. We hope you will join us for this opportunity with friends and finding great treasures! Please register online and mark your calendars for the fun times together!

Women's Ministry also held a Paint and Sip Event Sunday, July 27. About 30 women attended the event.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY "GONE FISHING" FOR SUMMER, LOOKS FORWARD TO COMING YEAR

By Becca Triemstra

This summer our 1st – 5th graders have 'Gone Fishin'! They've learned about how we're all called to be fishers of men. We've spent 6 weeks talking all about how we can do this. We've learned about the Beatitudes, spending time with Jesus, and having faith when the water gets rough. We're looking forward to our kick off on September 8 and the new things we'll be doing!



Photo used by Permission

CARE LEADERSHIP TEAM LAUNCHES NEW COMMUNITY OF CARE

Beginning in September, the Care Team is launching a new Community of Care (COC) visiting ministry. The COC will include 15-20 members of the church who are willing to visit other members on a regular basis and have gone through some basic training.

The purpose of the COC is to collaborate with the pastors, office-bearers, staff, and care groups in providing deeper levels of care and community as we support all members and regular attenders of the River Church. It is not to replace the important work of the pastors or office-bearers, but to work alongside them.

For the next six months, the COC will focus on our Senior members, age 65 and up. Pastor Scott has some very exciting ideas of how this could develop in the future.

The initial training will take place on three Sundays right after church, September 14, 21, and 28. These will be working lunches. A light meal will be served, but as soon as people are served the presentation will begin. The sessions should last about 90 minutes.

If you think you might enjoy visiting and want to see what this is all about, please join us for the luncheons. We do ask that you contact Dennis Barton, Brad Senti, or Pastor Rick just so we know how much food to prepare.

CHURCH DIRECTORIES AVAILABLE IN PRINT

If you are not able to access the new Church Directory online and would like a printed copy, please contact Rachel at the Front Office (909) 798-2221 or Pastor Rick (909) 576-5214. We will be happy to provide you with one.

CAREPORTAL UPDATE FROM JUNE AND JULY

By Debbie Bueermann

A 5th grader at Lugonia requested new socks. We were able to meet that request.

Another 5th grader at Lugonia requested new shoes. We were able to meet that request.

Through the Juvenile Justice League of Riverside, we were able to help a single mother buy clothing for her 4 children.

CarePortal request #23442 requested help for a single mother and her 6 children. This family had been staying with friends and relatives for a year. The mother was able to save her money and acquire an apartment. This family needed so much. Here's what we donated: food basket, cleaning supply basket, hygiene basket, used refrigerator, mop, dishes, silverware, mop, full bed with mattress, sofa, TV, and 2 dressers, table and 4 chairs, and a TV console.

The River church worked with a mechanic to help provide car repairs to a single mom in Hemet.

A used bike (thank you Jean & Gerrit Wagner), vacuum cleaner, cleaning supply basket and a Walmart gift card for clothing were given to an aging-out foster youth who was placed in an apartment. This student was also finishing his senior year and working. The bike was going to help him get to and from school and work.

Through the Juvenile Justice League of Riverside, we were able to help a single mother who had left a domestic violence situation. The request asked for a couch. We were also able to help this family by donating cleaning, hygiene, and food baskets.

A request for a refugee family asked for a refrigerator. We were able to meet this need.

This mother entered a DV shelter over a year ago where she was reunified with her two girls ages 10 and 14. She obtained employment and was able to secure a small studio apartment for them. Unfortunately, their new home did not have an a/c. The request asked for an a/c unit to be purchased and delivered from Amazon. We were able to meet this request.

Baby supplies and a gift card for clothing were provided to a young mother who had struggled with addiction. She completed an inpatient program, moved to sober living, and acquired employment. She was scheduled to move into a studio apartment. This gift card was given so she could buy the necessary supplies needed to get her son back.

Path of Life family shelter requested a gift card to help a family start over. We also provided food, hygiene and cleaning baskets.

A request came in from Path of Life to help a former resident pay for her RN application. This person completed the nursing program at UCR and was ready to take her California State boards to become a registered nurse.

Rental assistance for a resilient mother was provided.

A struggling single father requested help with groceries and a gas card. We were able to meet this need.

3 twin beds were delivered to a family on San Bernardino. (Thank you Jim and Roy).

A VISA gift card was given to a former Path of Life resident to pay for her Marriage & Family Therapist California law and ethics exam.

Rental assistance was provided to a grandmother who had taken in her 3 grandchildren.

Once again, thank you for supporting The River's CarePortal Ministries (Lugonia). It has been such a blessing to run this ministry, and I so appreciate the additional support for the local families we were able to help through Lugonia.



RVL DISCIPLESHIP: EXPERIENCE JESUS AS ONE OF HIS ORIGINAL DISCIPLES IN THEIR CULTURE, HISTORY, AND CONTEXT OFFERED FOR ADULTS DURING LEGACY NIGHTS THIS FALL

In RVL Discipleship: The Study, join Bible scholar Ray Vander Laan as he guides you from simply knowing Scripture to experiencing it as a disciple of Jesus. Through the lens of culture, history, and context, you'll explore what it meant to be one of Jesus' original disciples—and what that means for us today. This video series invites small groups and individuals to take steps of faith, moving from learning about Christ to living like Him.

- ⇒ Learn how to interpret Scripture through its historical and cultural lens.
- ⇒ Discover God's design for family, community, and identity.
- ⇒ Encounter the life and mission of Jesus Christ.
- ⇒ Understand what it means to truly follow Him as a modern-day disciple.

Since receiving his Master's of Divinity from Westminster Theological Seminary in 1976, Vander Laan has been actively involved in studying and teaching Jewish culture using the methods of Jewish education. He has continued graduate studies in Jewish Studies in the United States, Israel, Turkey and Egypt. He has been a teacher for 35 years and is an ordained minister with the Christian Reformed Church. Vander Laan founded The World May Know Ministries in 1998. Ray has taken over 10,000 people with him on his study tours of Israel, Turkey and Egypt.

Ray's preaching and teaching ministry is focused on understanding the Bible in light of the historical and cultural context in which God placed it.

SUMMER FUN EVENTS by Pastor Mario Perez, Jr.

This summer we were able to plan and host 4 events that took place both on and off the church campus! The first event, The Amazing Race, took place in June and participants worked together in teams to accomplish tasks and fun challenges! Our second event was a Redlands FC game night where we were able to watch our local soccer team play a fun game of soccer. The third event was a skate night where many gathered at Cal Skate in Grand Terrace and skated the night away! The final event was a summer night out at the Inland Empire 66ers, a local single A, minor league baseball team. As summer wraps up, we are excited for what God has for us this upcoming fall!



LONDON KERN SHARED AT AUGUST MEN'S BREAKFAST— SEPTEMBER SPEAKER TO BE DETERMINED

The August Men's Breakfast was very well attended. Landon Kern shared about his life and testimony. He said Romans 5, particularly verses 1-2 have guided him in his life, marriage, work, and ministry. "Therefore since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we also have obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God."

Landon was very transparent with his life before Jesus and his journey of faith. One of the things he shared is how important the sense of community at The River is for him and his family. He said, "I thought church was coming and listening to sermons, doing things, and having fun, but I never saw church as community until I came to The River."

Landon and his family live in Yucaipa where he is the Assistant City Engineer.

The next Men's Breakfast is scheduled for Saturday, September 6. If you haven't attended, please consider it. The breakfast is good and the fellowship is even better.



DEBLAUW FAMILY CELEBRATED 100 YEARS WITH FAMILY REUNION.

By Jani Van Gorp

One hundred years ago, on August 26, 1925, Bill and Ella DeBlauw (longtime members of this church) were married in Holland, Michigan. Earlier this month, about 90 members of their family gathered to celebrate this milestone with a reunion held at Camp Arroyo Grande. Bill and Ella were the parents of four sons (Andy, Bill, Walt, and Richard) and four daughters (Joyce, Janet, Eleanor, and Margie), who in turn have produced 26 grandchildren, 62 great-grandchildren, and 64 great-great grandchildren.

Only one of the eight siblings remains, Margie DeBlauw Thalmayer. A highlight of the reunion was celebrating her 80th birthday. Her two sons, Jeff and Matt, interviewed her at the celebration, and several nieces and nephews, and great-nieces and nephews sent in video messages to her. A good time was had by all!





David Oliver	September 05
Michael DeDoes	September 08
Grace Florence	September 12
Mae Bailey	September 13
Jack Bailey	September 14
Ruthanne Long	September 17
Jake DeHoog	September 19
Grace Monsma	September 25
Andrew Bruinsma	September 28
Steve Sirbully	September 28
Loretta Bruinsma	September 29
Leslie Sibley	October 01
Mike Turley	October 01
Debbie Clinton	October 03
Grace Van Der Laan	October 04

If we missed your birthday, we're sorry! Please let Pastor Rick know so we can update the church database. Thank you.

PRAYER REQUESTS & PRAISES

We try to be up to date, but sometimes things change and we're not aware of it. If you know of a praise or need that we might not be aware of, please let Pastor Rick know at 909.576.5214.

Debbie Clinton: Good news, Debbie Clinton is home following her kidney transplant in Scottsdale, AZ. Pray for her ongoing recuperation and that the transplant will increase her liver function.

Pastor Bill and Harriet Bierling: The treatments Harriet has been having have run their course and are no longer effective. They have been referred to City of Hope and will be consulting with doctors about what other treatment may be possible.

Chris and Jim Nydam and family: Chris has completed 6 rounds of chemotherapy. She is scheduled to start radiation in September. This has been and continues to be a challenging time for their family.

Harold Milligan: Harold Milligan had a brief stay in the hospital to deal with fluid retention and a blood clot. He had not been in the hospital since May. Pray for his health and for patience with his situation and the limitations involved.

Bert Block: As you know, three weeks ago I was diagnosed with a heart condition Atria Fibrillation (A-Fib.) My heart was beating irregularly causing me fatigue and hard breathing, especially sleeping. Dr.

ordered a cardio-inversion which is a treatment to reverse the uneven heart beats and restore my heart to normal. Then I had a wonderful surprise. When I appeared for the procedure the Dr. and staff determined after several EKG that it was unnecessary because my heart was normal. Surprise for me and for the hospital medical staff!. They sent me home with a clean bill of health.

I believe my healing was a miracle, the answer to the many prayers offered in my behalf. I'm extremely grateful to God and to the dear friends who prayed for me. I'm still under observation for several weeks but I trust the Lord that this ordeal is over.

Thank you for your concern and prayers. I hope to return to Redlands in September

Greg and Wanda Bachman: Please pray for Greg and Wanda as they navigate their health needs. They have decided just to monitor the spot on Wanda's lung and not do a biopsy. Greg is doing better and monitoring himself after a TIA in January.

Betty Kremer: Continue to pray for Betty as she adjusts to life without Peter. Give thanks and pray for her children who continue to look after her.

Rich and Karen Jarvis: Karen has resumed physical therapy. Pray for her health and strength. Pray for discernment both for the Jarvises as well as their doctors as they talk about the possibility of another surgery.

Grace Florence: Grace is doing somewhat better after a long period of being bedridden. She continues to have challenges with insurance companies over her care. Pray for healing and patience.

Glenn and Claire Huibregtse: Glenn continues to receive quarterly injections to suppress prostate cancer. Give thanks that the treatment has been successful and pray that the shots will continue to be effective.

Roger and Theora Whitman: Pray for Roger's health as he continues to undergo six treatments a month at City of Hope National Medical Center located in Duarte.

Norma Greenfield: Norma is doing better and is able to get around, but needs continuing prayer for strength as she would like to get to the point of being able to use a cane, not a walker or wheelchair.

Jean Wagner: Jean continues to get around, but is having severe pain in her knees that is affecting her ability to get around.

Those who are homebound or limited in their activities:

- Pearl Koning
- Claire Fik
- Marie Wiersma
- Jack and Mae Bailey
- Dick Dirksen
- Chuck and Joy Griffin
- Jake and Shari DeHoog