



1630 W. Republic Road * Springfield, MO 65807
www.gosouthland.org

The Southland Vine

For APRIL 2026

Who we are: A church family where *together* we are equipped to **LIVE OUT** faith in Christ as we **ENCOUNTER** God, **CONNECT** with others, **GROW DEEP** and **BUILD UP** one another.



**Good Friday service:
April 3 at 7pm**

**Resurrection Sunday
April 5 at 10:30am
(with breakfast at 9:30am)**

**We hope you join us as we
celebrate the Good News
of Jesus' death and resurrection!**



**“LIVE OUT: Service Day” 2026 is
coming soon - Sunday, May 3!**

See pages 3, 8 (Rick's article) and 20 for details.

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We'll publish the next edition of *The Vine* in late April/early May.

The 2026 Youth Yard Sale is May 1 and 2!

This a great time to do some “Spring cleaning” and identify items you can donate. Much has already come in, but we need more; please help as you can (see page 2).



Southland "FAMILY" News

We want to extend a "welcome to the family" to our newest members at Southland:

Josh & Abby Pryor (and son, Ezra)

The Pryors officially joined in early March.



UPCOMING EVENTS for the Southland family:

Throughout the course of the year, we have various events *for the whole church family*. At this point in the calendar, there's not another one of those until early Summer when we have our annual picnic (which is actually coming fairly soon! - see the next page). While there is much more information on the pages that follow, we want to make sure we highlight these church family-wide events here in one spot so that they're not missed:

A Note about "First Sunday CONNECTIONS"

We have occasionally hosted these times - on "first Sundays" of the month, obviously - for people to make connections with others - to bolster existing relationships and/or perhaps to establish new ones. However, due to the upcoming schedule of things (e.g., a fuller breakfast time at 9:30am on Easter Sunday, April 5 + a morning impacted by "LIVE OUT: Service Day" on 5/4 with our ENCOUNTER time at 9am + the picnic on the evening of 6/7, the first Sunday in June), we don't have a next one planned at this time. See below for other such opportunities, though.



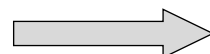
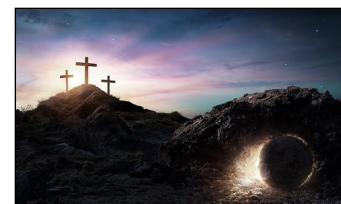
Each Summer, our high school students take an annual trip to the "MOVE" Conference (part of the ministry of CIY - see page 14 for details). It is a costly trip, and part of how the broader Southland family can support our young people is through the annual YOUTH YARD SALE.

The yard sale is *the* fundraising event for our students attending MOVE; each year it makes a big impact (last year, it raised over \$3,000)! This year's sale is on May 1 and 2; Les has been accepting donations for the sale from the Southland family. Obviously, such donations are crucial to making the yard sale successful, so we encourage you to help out in this way. You can bring items to the church anytime the building is open (there is a table in the south foyer for donations). If you need to have items picked-up, call or text Les to arrange a time; his number is 417-773-1650. Thanks for participating in this effort!

EASTER WEEKEND 2026 happens early on here in the month of April; as a reminder, here are the basic details about our plans:

We'll host our Good Friday service at 7pm on Friday, April 3 - a time to reflect on Jesus' death for us on the cross.

Then, Sunday, April 5 is Resurrection Sunday; we'll come together at 10:30am to celebrate what happened when God raised Jesus. *We'll have a special breakfast time at 9:30am this day as well.*





Our annual “LIVE OUT: Service Day” is Sunday, May 3. It’s a great day here at Southland as SERVING becomes our intentional focus church family -wide. We adjust the schedule for the morning (*a brief time of worship at 9am!!*) so we can have time to participate in serving. *After a different approach last year, we’re back to more of our “normal” for this day. Check out Rick’s article on page 8 for more on what we’re doing.* Otherwise, please put the date on your calendars and make plans to join us for this day (see page 20 for more on this day).

We see this as a FAMILY activity because it’s part of what should characterize us as God’s children: looking and serving *beyond* ourselves. It’s what we specifically emphasize on this day.

We have set a preliminary date for our annual Southland FAMILY Picnic: **Sunday, June 7 (later afternoon/evening)**. It will be held once again at Living Memorial Park. It’s an opportunity to come together as a Southland family as we enjoy a meal and some time with others in a relaxed environment - no specific structured plans besides the meal, just being together. We will communicate more details about what we need people to bring, etc. as we move into May.



Mission Trip back to Mexico - July 18-25 ... a group from within the Southland family will be returning to partner with *Casas por Cristo* in building a house for a family. See page 20 for more.



Our 2026 VBS is Monday, July 27 through Thursday, July 30: “**Emerald Crossing: An Irish Adventure through Psalm 23**” from Answers in Genesis. Each Summer, this is a key event in the life of our church family. While it’s designed for kids - both our own Southland kiddos as well as others, a successful VBS requires help from the *entire* church family. Over the next few months, there will be ways you can help - from volunteering to donating supplies, etc. (see page 18 for more on this).

Graduation Recognition for 2026 ...



Part of what we do each year is celebrate our graduates - *after all, it’s part of what a FAMILY does!* As we prepare for the 2026 season of pomp and circumstance, we are trying to make sure we have not left out the names of any graduates (high school or college) who are connected directly to the Southland family. Here’s the list we have:

2026 high school graduates: Zach Brothers, Allison Burford, Allie Conboy, Izzy Foster, Vaughn Gunter, Callie Kilgo, Zoey Smith, Ella Walter and Grace Worthy (some of these students participate in the youth group)

2026 college/post-college graduate: Grace Easterday, Liz Kilgo, Olivia Randleman and Kira Smith

PARENTS of 2026 high school grads: please see the note on page 14.

Please let Les (high school) or Rick (college or post-college) know if there are other graduates directly connected to the Southland family that we have missed so we can recognize them as part of our 2025 graduation recognition.



This is now the sixth year we have had the opportunity to offer a scholarship in memory of Warren Burros. As many of you will remember, Warren was a long-time elder and member at Southland who passed away in April of 2020. His long-time company decided to honor and reflect his legacy by contributing each year toward a scholarship fund that we would run. It's exclusively designed to bless and benefit high school graduates

from within our Southland family. We have developed criteria and an application process. Our intention is to make the scholarship available to *all* qualified applicants based on criteria such as involvement, service, future plans, etc. 2026 high school graduates can contact Les for a link to the application; it is available after April 8 (this date is significant as it is the anniversary of Warren's passing) and need to be completed/returned by the end of May.

“THANK YOU” Notes



In response to how we've shown care and concern in various situations, we at times receive cards, notes, etc. expressing gratitude to the SCC family. Since there is not a great place to display these cards, we share them with you here in this section of “The Vine.”

Dear Southland Family, thank you so much for helping celebrate my milestone 90th birthday in March. The way you celebrated my birthday made me very special. I'm thankful for my church family!

Love,
Dorothy Marti

We received the following note after the passing of Paul Bennett, Kim Tyler's step-Dad:

Thank you so much for the prayer and the beautiful plant. You all are such a blessing to us!

Love,
Kim & Jay

We received the following note after the passing of Jim Bosley, Debbie Gray's Dad:

Dear Southland Family, thank you so much for the beautiful plant you sent in memory of my dad. We greatly appreciate your prayers during my dad's failing health, and now, during this time of grieving his passing. Thank you again for your thoughtfulness.

In Christ's Love,
Debbie, Dan & Kayla Gray

OTHER GENERAL REMINDERS & INFO



TITHE.LY

We use an online platform called “Tithe.ly” as a giving option. It can be accessed at <https://tithe.ly/give?c=1302996> or through the app. Either way, you can find a page designed for Southland where you can give. In addition to regular giving, this can be used for other purposes like payment of fees. Especially when using this platform to make such a payment, we do ask that you cover any charges. There is certainly no requirement to use this tool, but we are grateful to have it available for those who choose to use it.

FINANCIAL UPDATE ... For March 2026

We provide this basic info to keep you updated about what's happening with giving at Southland. In each edition of "The Vine," we share a monthly snapshot with a ministry year total as well.

INCOME: March monthly tithe = \$47,051⁰⁰ (5 Sundays) Average weekly tithe = \$9,410²⁰
Seven months into this fiscal/ministry year-to-date (September 2025 onward), our tithe is \$290,363 for a weekly average of a little more than \$9,675 ... this projects to more than \$503,000 annually.

We started this ministry year in a good spot overall, including some layers of reserve. At this point, we're actually a bit *behind* last year's pace (on a month-by-month basis). Even still, we continue to be in good shape, *especially with the layers of reserve we have*. As a reminder, our budgeted tithe need for this year is in the \$480,000 range. We also continue to encourage you to keep pressing on in your financial participation with our ministry - as 2 Corinthians 8 puts it, "to excel in this grace of giving." As always, leadership works to manage where we are overall with wise stewardship - balancing our responsibility to be realistic while still prioritizing effective ministry and necessary expenses that arise along the way ... of course, with appropriate faith in His provision factored-in as well!

Weekly ministry happenings - Southland FAMILY-wide:

Sunday mornings at 9:15am ... ministry programming for all ages including CONNECT Groups for adults - Sunday School classes for all kids and youth as well. See page 17 for more specifics. *We are not meeting on April 5, Easter Sunday, due to our special breakfast time that morning at 9:30am (we will not meet on Sunday, May 3 either).*



Sunday mornings at 10:30am ... our ENCOUNTER service - the time when we gather as a church FAMILY to meet with God; you can join us "in person" or online via the live stream if you cannot be here. See page 16 for more on this.

Sunday evenings (6-8pm - *not meeting on Sunday, April 5, then Sunday, April 26 is the last one for this ministry year*) ... Group Huddle for middle school and high school youth; see pages 12-13 for more information.

Wednesday evening CULTIVATE, a "GROW DEEP" ministry ... 5:30 for dinner, 6:30 for ministry programming. At this point, we're in another session of D-Groups to wrap-up this semester; see page 17. We wrap-up this semester and ministry year on Wednesday, April 29.



Thursday mornings (10am start time) ... WSA - Ladies' Bible Study using D-Group content; see page 15. *WSA completes the current session and semester at the end of April.*

Specific Events to Highlight (listed by date):

We try to consolidate into one list the dates you need to be aware of for the weeks ahead.

The month of April ... it's camp registration season; see pages 10-11 for details and instructions about this process as we look forward to the 2026 camp season!

Friday, April 3 ... Good Friday service at 7pm.



Sunday, April 5 ... Resurrection Sunday 2026 - a special church FAMILY breakfast to celebrate the day, followed by our 10:30am ENCOUNTER time.

Sunday, April 5 ... no Group Huddle on this day (Resurrection Sunday).

Wednesday, April 8 ... the opening of the application process for the “Warren Burros Memorial Scholarship” - this date is significant; see page 4 for more.

Friday, April 10 ... the annual banquet for the Pregnancy Care Center (see p. 20)

Saturday, April 11 ... “Bullfrogs and Butterflies” at Maranatha Bible Camp for 1st and 2nd graders; see page 10 for more details about this event.

Sunday, April 19 ... Group Huddle’s graduate recognition.

Friday, April 24 and Saturday, April 25 ... Women’s Event/Conference at Ozark Christian College in Joplin, MO.

Sunday, April 26 ... “Open Hearts, Open Homes” lunch after service.

Sunday, April 26 ... end-of-semester Group Huddle bash; see page 12 for details.

Sunday, April 26 ... the deadline for registering for the summer camp season at Maranatha (again, see pages 10-11 for specifics about this process overall).

Wednesday, April 29 ... the last Wednesday evening CULTIVATE for this ministry year.

Thursday, April 30 ... due date for the \$150 initial deposit for the 2026 mission trip to Mexico (see p. 20).

Friday, May 1 and Saturday, May 2 ... the annual youth yard sale; see page 2 for details about donating items - see page 14 for details for youth/parents.

Sunday, May 3 ... our annual “LIVE OUT: Service Day” - see page 8 (Rick’s article) and page 20 for details. *As a reminder, for this morning, we gather for a briefer ENCOUNTER time at 9am before serving in the community; we will come back together for lunch afterwards.*

Sunday, May 17 ... camp payments are due.

Sunday, May 31 ... the deadline for applications to be turned in by 2026 high school graduates for the “Warren Burros Memorial Scholarship” (again, see p. 4).

Some late Spring and Summer dates so you can have these on your calendar:

Sunday, June 7 ... Promotion Sunday 2026.

Sunday, June 7 ... the date for our 2026 church FAMILY picnic.

Various dates in June ... sessions at Maranatha Bible Camp (see p. 10).

Saturday, June 27 ... the 2026 Ladies’ Afternoon Tea.

July 5-10 ... the high school MOVE conference (see p. 14).

July 18-25 ... a mission trip to Mexico with *Casas por Cristo* (see p. 20).

Monday, July 27 through Thursday, July 30 (starts at 6pm each day) ... “Emerald Crossing: An Irish Adventure through Psalm 23” - our 2026 VBS.

Sunday, August 30 ... FLOURISH 2026.

What MATTERS to me ...

I write this article as we're moving toward Easter Sunday. It's always been a special day in my life. I can remember childhood years when it meant a "Sunrise Service" early in the morning. (I remember it feeling especially early on those rare years when it fell on "Spring Forward" day at the start of daylight saving time.) After the brief early service, we'd have a special breakfast, followed by the normal Sunday morning schedule. I can remember singing the few Easter songs, one like "Up from the grave He arose (He arose) with a might triumph o'er His foes (o'er His foes)." There weren't usually any family extras on the day, but what happened at church in the morning certainly kept the emphasis on Jesus' resurrection.

Of all of the Easters I can remember from growing up, there are two specific ones I particularly remember. The first was also my 9th birthday which also became my spiritual birthday - April 19, 1987, the day of my baptism. It actually happened in the evening, but it was all part of that special day. While it wasn't this massive conversion story of a hellion whose life was drastically changed, I still acknowledge that as a transforming day. As Paul packages the symbolism in Romans 6:3-4, we are identifying with Jesus in His death, burial and resurrection as we die with Him, are "buried in the waters of baptism" and are raised to new life. The second memorable Easter happened sometime in my teen years. I cannot even tell you what actually unfolded during that particular sunrise service, but I distinctly remember the impact in my heart as I marveled at the astonishing truth of Jesus' resurrection. It may have been the first time I experienced those spiritual tears that come when your heart is overwhelmed and there are no words. The Holy Spirit used the Good News of Jesus' resurrection - what it means for us, what it says about Jesus, etc. - to capture my heart in a way that was hard to describe. For a kid who was raised by parents who were never very "feelings" based (especially my Mom), it was a rather odd phenomenon to experience at that stage of life. It's still a bit emotional to reflect on that day.

Those Easter memories are significant in my journey. They also help point to the power of the resurrection - what it does in our hearts and in our lives as we grasp the significance of the day. It was years later when I really came across the words that Paul writes in Ephesians 1. As part of his prayer for the believers in Ephesus, he prays that they would "understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe Him - the same power that raised Christ from the dead." We can think of powerful realities in our world: the massive roar of a waterfall, an intense thunderstorm, a rushing river, dynamite (which actually comes from the Greek word for power that Paul use in Ephesians 1), etc. Yet, Paul points us to the empty tomb to remind us of "the incredible greatness of God's power." Not only was it present in Jesus' resurrection, it's the same power present through the Holy Spirit who dwells within us as His people. It's meant to reassure us - whatever feels too impossible to overcome in your life, nothing is too great for His capacity! It's what raised Jesus, brining life from death. It's what transformed the lives of His followers. It's what turned the life of Saul of Tarsus upside-down ... from persecutor to faithful missionary spreading the Good News. Still today, it's what changes lives as His power continues to be at work!

Tim Keller once shared the following story about the power of Jesus' resurrection (this was also shared as part of the D-Group curriculum, the first week in this overall session):

A minister was in Italy, and there he saw the grave of a man who had died centuries before who was an unbeliever and completely against Christianity, but a little afraid of it too. So, the man had a huge stone slab put over his grave so he would not have to be raised from the dead in case there is a resurrection from the dead. He had inscriptions put all over the slab saying, "I do not want to be raised from the dead. I don't believe in it." Evidently, when he was buried, an acorn must have fallen into the grave. So a hundred years later the acorn had grown up through the grave and split that slab. It was now a tall towering oak tree.

The minister looked at it and asked, "If an acorn, which has the power of biological life in it, can split a slab of that magnitude, what can the acorn of God's resurrection power do in a person's life?"

The minute you decide to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord, the power of the Holy Spirit comes into your life. It's the power of the resurrection - the same thing that raised Jesus from the dead. ... Think of the

SOUTHLAND Kids

CHECK-IN Process for our Kids' Ministries



We use a check-in process on Sunday mornings for those who are participating in our ministries for kids (birth through 5th grade).

This is for those coming for the first time - it takes a little longer to provide some basic registration information - and for regulars.

REMINDER: *We use this process for both time slots on Sundays so please check your kids in when you first arrive.*

Sunday School Classes for kids (9:15am on Sundays)

We have kids' Sunday School classes as part of our regular weekly schedule. In addition to nursery for our youngest ones, we have classes for all ages. *We have normal 9:15am classes in April except for 4/5 (Easter Sunday) - we have a breakfast that morning at 9:30am.*

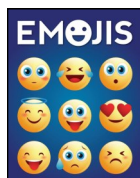


Kids' Programming during ENCOUNTER (10:30am on Sundays)

Here's what happens for kids 5th grade and younger during this time slot.

Nursery, "Wee Kid ENCOUNTER" (for 2-&-3 year-olds) and "Li'l Kid ENCOUNTER" (kids up through Kindergarten/1st grade - those in 1st grade have the option: here or in "Kid ENCOUNTER") are all available throughout our ENCOUNTER time.

Kid ENCOUNTER (1st through 5th graders) meets during the sermon portion of service. Kids start with their families and then are dismissed at the appropriate time. *Kid ENCOUNTER is meeting as normal throughout April.*



After Easter Sunday, Kid ENCOUNTER is using a new curriculum called "Emojis" - we see these little symbols all the time, it seems! They have become a fun and simple way to express our feelings to others. God has created us with these emotions and has a purpose for them. But, how can kids learn to express them in a way that honors Him? That's what this session is about!

Wednesday evenings this Winter/Spring



Kids up through 5th grade have their own programming as part of CULTIVATE on Wednesday evenings (they meet in the Fellowship Hall). Jessica leads this time with a lesson series called "Dave Did!" The curriculum focuses on King David, one of the most fascinating characters in the Bible - a warrior, a poet, a man after God's own heart.

April is our last month of Cultivate for this ministry year - kids will wrap-up this session on April 29 with a special time with games and ice cream floats.

An Upcoming Event for 1st and 2nd Graders:

"Bullfrogs and Butterflies" at Maranatha Bible Camp

Saturday, April 11
(leave at 8am and return at 4:45pm)



This is a day specially-designed for younger grade school students. This session emphasizes how God's Word changes us! Cost is \$25/camper; this for both the student and one parent (a second parent can attend for an additional \$10). Please let Jessica know ASAP if you haven't yet registered and want your child(ren) to attend.

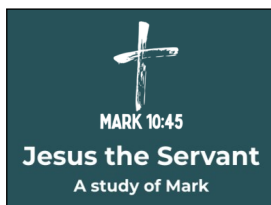
A Look Ahead to Our 2026 VBS - July 27-30 (evenings)



As we move further into this new year, we're gearing up for our 2026 VBS. This year's (Irish) theme focuses on Psalm 23. As is the case each year, we're excited about this event and all that will happen in these jam-packed days! Once we get closer to Summer - likely in May - we'll start sharing the registration link so kids and their friends can get signed-up. VBS is a great week for the kids and everyone involved within the Southland family!

If you are interested in serving as a volunteer, we'd love - and need - your help; please see page 18 for a link you can use to sign-up to serve (you can also contact Jessica directly). We will continue to have meetings in the months ahead as we plan for VBS 2026.

Summer Camp 2026



Summer is fast approaching. Among other things, that means another camp season at Maranatha Bible Camp is upon us. We've been communicating the dates of the sessions Southland groups are attending (they're listed again below). April means it's specifically time for camp registration to happen!

Here again are the sessions/dates Southland groups are attending:

Camp Session (ages/grades)*	Dates (days of the week)
Beginner Camp 2 (K-1 st)	June 13 (Saturday)
Kids' Camp 1 (2 nd -4 th)	June 18-20 (Thursday through Saturday)
5 th /6 th Grade Camp 1	June 14-17 (Sunday through Wednesday)
Junior High Camp (7 th -8 th)	June 28 - July 2 (Sunday through Thursday)

* Remember: it's the grade a student will be entering for the 2026-2027 school year!

See the next page for specific registration instructions unique to us here at Southland as we get into this process in 2026.

Summer Camp 2026 - Registration Details

Specific INSTRUCTIONS for CAMP REGISTRATION: Maranatha uses an electronic registration system. Because we offer scholarships for those who attend camp through Southland, there is some uniqueness to the way we handle this process that requires more details. Please use the same camp website listed below to register your child(ren) as well as yourself if you are planning to go as a sponsor (we do always appreciate such volunteers who are willing and able to serve in this way; please contact Jessica or Les in advance if you are wanting to sponsor).



<https://maranathabiblecamp.campbrainregistration.com/?ReturnUrl=%2fHome%2fLanding>
(if viewing "The Vine" electronically, you can click directly on the link)

Choose the "2026 Summer Camps" option. If you already have an account, you should be able to log back in with those credentials and go from there. Otherwise, you will be prompted to create an account and then, proceed to complete the registration process.

2 special instructions to help us with our own internal processes (e.g. scholarships, etc.):

1. Make sure you choose "Southland Christian (Church)" when registering. This really is the only way we can know who has signed-up to attend with us. The same applies if your child is bringing a friend.
2. As with last year, there is a place for you to enter a discount code during this process; enter "Southland26" in that space (a code unique to Southland). This will zero out your balance owed, which we need to happen because of how we handle this overall process with camp scholarships. Once all the registrations are in - our deadline is April 26 - we calculate the amount owed by each family based on the scholarship funds we have available. We then communicate that amount to families and collect it by mid-May. From there, Southland sends the full balance owed to the camp.

During April (4/12 onward), we will have a station available in the foyer to help with this registration process if/as it's needed. Feel free to stop by and register your kids there.

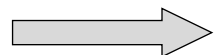
LES' LATEST

Most of life runs on transactions. A transaction means that you give something in order to receive something in return. You study to earn a grade, work to get paid and practice to play more minutes. The world trains us to think in terms of **"what do I get out of this?"** But following Jesus doesn't work that way. Your relationship with Jesus is not a transaction - it's a covenant. A covenant is a promise based on love and faithfulness, not conditions or paybacks. It's not about keeping score, but about keeping your word.

In Matthew 16:24-25 Jesus offers this promise:

"If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.
For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it."

He wasn't offering a trade. He didn't say, "Give Me this, and I'll give you that." He was inviting His followers into something deeper: a relationship of surrender and trust. A transaction says, "I'll give if I get." A covenant says, "I'll give because I love."



Jesus modeled that kind of covenant love perfectly. He didn't die on the cross to get something from us; He died to give something to us. When we choose Jesus, we're not trading for a better life, we're surrendering to the One who already gave his life for us. Covenant love gives without expecting anything in return. When Jesus calls us to take up our cross and follow Him, He's inviting us to live that same way - to lay down comfort, pride or control for the sake of love. Taking up your cross doesn't mean chasing pain; it means choosing obedience.

GROUP HUDDLE NEWS

"GROUP HUDDLE" is a weekly time (normally meets from 6-8pm on Sundays) for middle school and high school students. It offers a place for students to connect and dive into God's Word as they participate in meaningful small groups, worship and fellowship - see below for more details about what's happening as we wrap-up this semester and ministry year.

Upcoming Group Huddle Schedule:

- Sunday, 4/5** ***No Group Huddle; enjoy Resurrection Sunday with your family!***
- Sunday, 4/12** **"Le Formal"** - Get your money's worth from the prom attire; it's fancy dress-up night!
- Sunday, 4/19** **"Graduation Celebration"** - On this special night, we're honoring the class of 2026 and those who helped them succeed: Google, ChatGPT and caffeine!
- Sunday, 4/26** **"End-of-the Semester Bash"** - We wrap-up our current semester/year with a fun night together: mini-golf, then supper out. It's an opportunity to walk the course pretending your putter is a fancy cane!
- Bring \$3 for mini-golf and as well as for supper afterwards at Braum's!***



We'll leave the church at 5pm and return at 8pm.

GROUP HUDDLE MEALS:

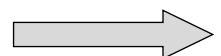


Each semester, we ask parents to help defray the expense of feeding several hungry teens at Group Huddle. ***If you haven't yet, please pay \$30 for each student*** (we've raised this total recently due to rising food costs; this does cover the whole semester through April).

You can pay this by check or through Tithe.ly by choosing the "Group Huddle meals" option; please cover the fee for this if you are using this option (see p. 4 for more on using Tithe.ly).

GROUP HUDDLE and CHILDREN'S MISSIONS:

For this year, we are supporting **Andy & Lisa (Husted) Nunn** as our mission partners. They are in London - Andy's home country - as part of a broader ministry called **"Discipleship Global."** They are currently assisting with a church-plant, conducting Bible studies and doing some one-on-one discipleship. They also have the opportunity to share the Gospel in



intermediate schools within London. Each Sunday that we meet, our students have the opportunity to pray for our mission partners and give during both "Kid ENCOUNTER" and Group Huddle Bible Study.

We recently surpassed the \$1,000 mark for this year - way to go students (and parents); thanks for your generosity in supporting this Kingdom work

MORE MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

SUNDAY SCHOOL (starts at 9:15am on Sunday mornings): We have separate Sunday School classes for our MS and HS youth. *Both have moved to the Gathering Room (off of the Great Room; that room has a middle divider for when the classes meet separately).* ***We are meeting as normal this month, except for Sunday, April 5 - Easter Sunday - when we have a church-wide breakfast at 9:30am instead of normal 9:15am classes/groups.***

Wednesday Evening CULTIVATE (6:30-7:45 each week): Part of our Wednesday evening ministry programming includes a time for our middle school/high school youth. The current Cultivate session runs through the end of April; ***our last evening for this semester/ministry year is Wednesday, April 29.***

FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Beyond our ongoing ministry programming, there are two significant events coming this Summer specifically designed for middle school students. We'll share more about both of these along the way, but we wanted to make sure they were on your calendars even now.

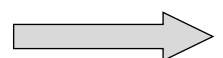
- (1) Junior High Camp at Maranatha (this is for *next year's* 7th and 8th graders; of course, there are sessions for younger grade school students, too) - Sunday, June 28 through Thursday, July 2, later than normal ... check out pages 10-11 for information about registering for this.**
- (2) VBS week (July 27-30 ... 6-8:30pm each night) - in addition to what VBS offers for younger students, each year, ours also includes special activities designed for middle school youth (*this will be for those going into 6th-8th grades in the 2026-2027 school year*). As we get closer to Summer, Les will share details about our plans for these evenings.**

FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ...

Attention 2026 High School Graduates (and Parents):



Check out page 4 for information about a scholarship opportunity available to graduates within the Southland family - "**The Warren Burros Memorial Scholarship.**" We'll open that application process **on April 8** which is the anniversary of Warren's passing. Contact Les if you are a graduating senior and want to apply for this. ***The deadline for submitting an application is the end-of-May.***



Graduation Recognition for our 2026 Seniors

Group Huddle's graduate recognition is on Sunday, April 19 this year. In addition to that, we highlight our graduates church-wide in the May edition of the "The Vine" and through a display in the foyer around graduation season.

So, PARENTS of 2026 graduates, please submit a photo to Les (e-mail to les@gosouthland.org) as soon as possible.



Please make sure you check out page 3 for a list of our 2026 Southland graduates. As we prepare to celebrate them, we want to make sure we aren't missing anyone who is part of this year's class.



The High School "MOVE" Conference

July 5-10 @ in Lincoln, Nebraska

(for the graduating classes of 2026-2030)

At this point in the registration process, our group is set; please make sure to let Les know ASAP if you have given a "YES," but are no longer able to attend for some reason.

The total cost for this year's conference is \$489. This includes all of the conference fees and housing as well as transportation costs; it doesn't cover any travel meals, merch, etc. for the conference. **After two deposits so far, the balance will be due in June (post-yard sale).**

As a reminder, we do help offset the cost of the MOVE Conference through the annual yard sale fundraiser (in addition to the cinnamon roll fundraiser back in November); **we have set the dates for this year's sale: Friday, May 1 and Saturday, May 2.** Each year, we collect donations for this event from church families and others connected to Southland (see page 2 for more on this aspect of the yard sale); it's a great way for us to help with the overall cost of the conference for our students.



To receive a "credit," students need to cover a shift or work out other arrangements with Les. Be watching for specific options (*there will be a sign-up sheet available at some point in April*).



Southland Women

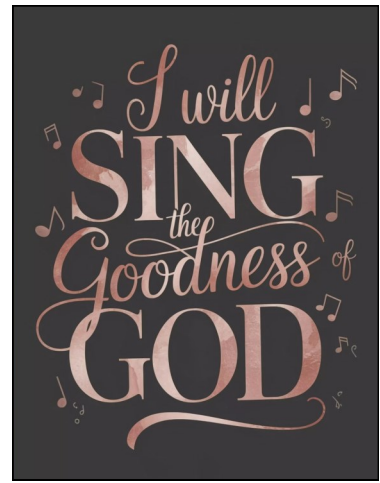
You surely had to know I would write about my granddaughter, right?! How could I not 😊?

As this season has been drawing near, it has been exciting. It has also brought a few concerns and some hopes that we weren't sure would play out exactly as we wished. But as I write this today, little Vienna has safely arrived and is doing great; and, Mama and Dada, are too!

God's goodness feels extra close today. His goodness is evident all around us, but in particular seasons, we may feel it more keenly. The safe, healthy arrival of our first grandbaby certainly feels like that kind of season. Today especially, my heart sings along with the song "Goodness of God" -



*I love You, Lord,
Oh, Your mercy never failed me
And all my days, I've been held in Your hands
From the moment that I wake up
Until I lay my head
Oh, I will sing of the goodness of God
All my life You have been faithful
All my life You have been so, so good
With every breath that I am able
Oh, I will sing of the goodness of God*



Spring is a season when we watch the dead of winter give way to green colors and floral blooms. We see God's goodness in the natural world. We also see it in specific circumstances that are extra special blessings, like the safe and healthy arrival of a precious new baby. Some seasons bring an extra dose of God's joy and blessing.

We know God's goodness is present in difficult times, too. Jesus never promised life would be easy or safe. In fact, He said in John 16:33b "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." He is close to us even when life is hard. In fact, sometimes we can feel the closest to Him when we are in a challenging season. We often stretch and grow at these times, and, we learn just how faithful He is.

In any and every season, we can see God's goodness at work. Whatever season you may be in, I pray you see His goodness and faithfulness. May you have days when your heart joins in the song above, and you also sing "All my life You have been faithful. All my life You have been so, so good. With every breath that I am able, Oh, I will sing of the goodness of God."

 Kristie



This ministry is an opportunity for women of all ages and life stages to spend time studying God's Word together while forming bonds with sisters in Christ (for "CONNECTING" and/or "GROWING DEEP").

WSA meets from 10am to noon on Thursdays in Room #6.

WSA has resumed following the D-Group material for the rest of this semester/ministry year (through the end-of-April). There will be other opportunities for connecting this Summer - including the return of Summer ladies' lunches.

Our 5th annual women's Summer gathering though, as in 2026, it has now become the "Ladies' Afternoon Tea!"

Theme: "Timeless Faith" - Saturday, June 27 at 1pm

At this event, we enjoy time together as sisters-in-Christ, eat delicious food, listen to a speaker and more. Please mark the date on your calendar and plan to join us for this special event!



WEEKLY ENCOUNTER

... a time to gather in God's presence together.

Upcoming Worship Nights

We occasionally have these times as part of our broader worship ministry. These opportunities are specifically set aside for a music-centered worship experience. *The current plan is to host a few of these over the Summer months (likely on Wednesdays since CULTIVATE isn't meeting); be watching for more details.* We hope you join us for these times as we encounter our Father in a different context, but still to express our praise and adoration!



What's Upcoming in our ENCOUNTER Time



During the month of March, we moved toward the Easter season in our preaching with our "FOLLOW" sermon series. As we come to the beginning of April, we focus directly on Jesus' death on Good Friday (service at 7pm on 4/3) and His resurrection on Easter Sunday (10:30am on 4/5). This is ultimately why we follow Him - because of what God has done for us through this Good News!

Beyond the Easter season, our ENCOUNTER time will be impacted by two special days:

- ◇ **A WORSHIP-focused service on Sunday, April 12** (no typical sermon, but a fuller time of worship through songs, Scripture readings, prayer/reflection time, etc.).
- ◇ **Our "LIVE OUT: Service Day" on Sunday, May 3** - this day includes *a briefer ENCOUNTER service at 9am* instead of our normal 10:30am start time (make sure you note the special start time for this day only) before we participate in serving.

Otherwise, we're still working through our preaching calendar as we move beyond the Easter season, factoring-in these special days. We'll share more on "The Scoop" along the way.

We continue to offer a LIVE STREAM of our worship service through Facebook LIVE. *You can access it directly from our website itself:* <http://gosouthland.org/watch-online> *or through our general/public Southland Facebook page.* Even though this format is not as ideal as "in-person" participation - the much better way of joining us for our weekly ENCOUNTER - we do value this online option as an alternative, *especially on a Sunday like back in January that was impacted by weather!* Whatever the reason you are not able to be present with us in-person, you can still stay connected to your church family in this way.



Facebook is no longer archiving past videos as it used to. So, if you're looking for past services, you can now access them on YouTube - find us there through a search for "Southland Christian Church" (clarify Springfield, MO) or at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/@southlandcclstreams>. If you missed a week and want to catch-up, they are accessible at this location.



YouVersion

The well-known BIBLE app (a.k.a. "YouVersion") is a great app for accessing God's Word electronically. There's also a feature within the app that we use during our ENCOUNTER time. It is simply called "EVENTS." It's a great way to follow along with the sermon and even take electronic notes. **Please ask if you need help finding and/or using the app.**



OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD UP

... a way to serve others and even help ourselves grow.

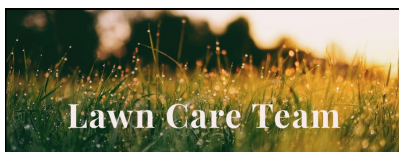
This section of the Vine provides a central place for you to be informed about how to become active in service at Southland. One of our major priorities is to be a place where God's people BUILD UP one another. In fact, according to Ephesians 4:16, the overall health of the church (the Body) depends upon each part doing its "own special work." Through our acts of service, God uses us to help others grow. At the same time, here's what is beautiful about God's design: what we do for the benefit of others even has benefits for our own growth as followers of Jesus.

Opportunities to Serve & "BUILD UP" the Body

We use this space to share some specific ways we need volunteers. In so many different ways, just like any FAMILY, we function as we do *because of the willing-hearted servants* who BUILD UP others through serving.

Here are a few specific ways you can help moving forward:

Our Maranatha Bible Camp season requires sponsors who attend sessions with our students. If you are willing to volunteer in this way, please contact Jessica or Les as soon as possible. You'll use the same registration process as the kids do (see pages 10-11).



Lawn Care Team

We're into the Spring season, and with that comes the need for help with mowing, weed-eating, etc. *We have already developed the main mowing schedule for 2026 (thanks to all who have volunteered to serve in this way!).*

But there's still time to let Rick know if you are willing to help as part of this team; we'll find a way to plug you in to serve as part of this!

As usual, there are ways you can help with our **2026 VBS**; the dates are July 27-30 (each day from 6-8:30pm). Here are two specific ways. **We need volunteers** (if you are willing to serve, please use the following link: <https://gosouthland.myanswers.com/emerald-crossing/volunteer/>). **We also need help with donations again**, if that's more of how you can help; we'll share more about what you can provide sometime in May. It takes all of us working together to make such an event happen for our kids. Please be considering what part you can play!



Beyond these opportunities, there are several other ongoing ways where you can get involved; and, we encourage you to do so. See the blue flyer at the Welcome Center display for more details about such volunteer opportunities. You can use one of the blue "BUILD UP" cards to let us know where you want to get plugged-in to serving.

Ephesians 4:11-16



"He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love." (Ephesians 4:16)

SERVING SCHEDULE for April 2026

	Foyer Hosts (10:15 on, through whole service)	Greeters (at the doors from 10:15-10:40)	Serving Team Leader
4/5	Doug & Susan Graves	<i>T.B.D. (Easter Sunday Breakfast)</i>	Mark Miller
4/12	Les & Kristin Londeen	Room #6 Connect Group	Doug Graves
4/19	A.J. & Terra Gegg	Room #7 Connect Group	Deckard Family
4/26	Pat & Debbie Little	“Voyage” Connect Group	Les Londeen

	Nursery workers (all morning)	Wee Kid ENCOUNTER & Li'l Kid ENCOUNTER	Kid ENCOUNTER (1 st - 5 th grades)
4/5	Harnstrom Family	<i>Kristin Londeen Talia Stone</i>	Sean & Megan Falconer
4/12	Darrell & Lisa Deckard	<i>Harmony Martin Sandy Arneson/Becky Kurth</i>	Jessica Young/Cary Swadley
4/19	Lillard Family	<i>Ezri Smith Debbie Hoenshell</i>	Thomas & Stef Hall
4/26	Wilcox Family	<i>Aiden Simpson + Izzy Lillard Harmony Martin</i>	Dylan & Jessica Young

LAWN CARE Schedule (mowing/trimming work needs to be completed by the Saturday date listed):

4/4 - Harnstrom/Pryor

4/11 - Little/Martin

4/18 - Brothers/Easter

4/25 - Deckards

5/2 - Constantine/Jennings



LIVE OUT
MINISTRIES



... a path for putting
faith into action.

Our local ministry partners:


www.maranatha
biblecamp.org


a community of students pursuing Jesus
www.cchonthe.net


www.ccozarks.
org/crosslines

 PREGNANCY
CARE CENTER
www.417pcc.org

www.show-mehome.com

Christian Youth Home

www.occ.edu




Each year, the Pregnancy Care Center hosts an annual fundraiser banquet. *This year, it is being held on Friday, April 10 from 6-8pm.* As in past years, we are again hosting a banquet table at this event as part of our efforts to support the PCC's ministry. We are certainly grateful for the partnership we share with the PCC; and, in addition to our regular support we send from the tithe, we want to support their work in this way as well. **Please let Rick know ASAP if you want to attend!**

“LIVE OUT: Service Day” - Sunday, May 3, 2026



This has become one of our favorite days on the calendar at Southland ... a day for us church-wide to have an intentional focus on SERVICE - living out an active love in our community. To give you a glimpse of what happens: we meet at 9am for a briefer time of ENCOUNTER worship (please note this time change for this one Sunday only!). We then leave to spread out and serve in various projects around our community. We're certainly looking forward to it!

We are in the process of planning and preparing for the 2026 version of our “LIVE OUT: Service Day.” See Rick’s article on page 8 for some information as we resume with more local service. (You might remember last year, we all worked together at Southland in partnership with an organization called Lifeline Christian Mission as we packaged food to help support their ministry efforts.)

Also, we will again wear t-shirts especially designed for this day (most of us wear jeans and these shirts on this day). For now, if you have one from a previous year, make sure it still works. *If you haven't been around - or if you simply need a new one, please let us know at the display in the foyer as soon as possible (it's available at the start of April).*



We pray that God will use this day to help us be a blessing to our community around us as we LIVE OUT service!

To keep you informed about Southland’s foreign missions partners, we strive to provide updates when available (now in the hallway across from the nursery entrance). This is really the only way one of our partners can communicate with us. Their location makes any online presence too risky from a security standpoint. We do regularly make their newsletters available as they come in.



There is a website for the “Central India Christian Mission” (www.indiamission.org); check it out for more information about their work. You can also find their Facebook page for ongoing updates or use this link to get access to e-mails: <https://www.indiamission.org/aboutcicm>.

Check out the website for “Life of Hope Ministries” at www.lifeofhope.org. Through our connection with this organization, we are privileged to partner with various ministries on the ground in Guatemala.



A REMINDER: Life of Hope does offer a child sponsorship program; for \$35/month, you can support a child through their work. For more details and/or to sign-up, check out their website (click on the “Child Sponsorship” tab).

A 2026 Mission Trip Opportunity:



We are preparing for a return trip to Anapra, Mexico with *Casas por Cristo* this Summer (July 18-25). On this trip, we will be building another house to bless a different family. As a reminder, the total cost is \$375 - we build into our missions budget the funds to pay for the house itself ... **an initial deposit of \$150 is due by April 30, then the remaining balance of \$225 is due by June 1.**