



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

The Southland Vine

For AUGUST 2025

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.



You're invited!

FLOURISH

Sunday, August 24 at 5PM

Each year, as we move toward a new ministry year in September, we come together for our annual FLOURISH event. We gather as a church FAMILY to celebrate how God has been at work; of course, it's also about looking and moving forward together as He is leading us.

See pages 2-3 for even more details about the evening!

Please RSVP for the event (starting August 3) so we can be prepared for meal/childcare purposes.

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We will publish the next edition of *The Vine* in late August.

Due to the busy-ness around the publishing of this edition of "The Vine," it is a bit limited, specifically, no staff articles. We do still have a lot to share as we move into August and a new ministry year.

Southland "FAMILY" News



Congratulations to **Marshall Gunter** who was immersed into Christ by Les on Sunday morning, July 27 (a by-product of "MOVE").

We rejoice with his in this decision to follow Jesus!

A look back to the month of July:

Within the Southland family, July was another active month highlighted by the following:

1. Another great MOVE Conference for our high school students (see pages 11-12 for more on that week). *Thanks, again, Southland family for supporting our youth in their trip.*
2. Our 2025 mission trip with Life of Hope. We are grateful for those who went as representatives of the Southland family! The group will be sharing a *brief* report on Sunday, August 10 during our ENCOUNTER time.
3. Our VBS toward the end of the month ... so much happened during that week that's *supposed* to happen in a FAMILY. Kids were able to learn the truth of God's Word. They found and experienced LOVE - even God's love through the conduit of other people. They had lots of fun being with God's people. Of course, along the way, many, many people volunteered (see pages 16-17 for a list), allowing relationships to be built or even to be established for the first time. Serving together is a great way for a family to be connected. Indeed, VBS 2025 truly was a great week in the life of our church FAMILY; thanks to all who made it happen!

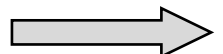
All of that is beyond the more ongoing "regular" ways we shared life together during July. As always, it was a month filled with reminders of the many ways we find great blessing by being united together as church FAMILY.

Some UPCOMING EVENTS in the Life of the Southland Family:

Throughout this edition of "The Vine," we continue to share about several key upcoming events in the life of Southland - some for the whole Southland family and others within our ministries for specific groups, etc. While there is much more information on the pages that follow, we want to make sure we especially highlight the broader FAMILY-wide impacts here in one spot:

Sunday, August 24 at 5pm - FLOURISH 2025

Each year, our annual FLOURISH gathering is an important event in the life of the Southland FAMILY. It's an opportunity for our church family to enjoy time together as family (including a delicious meal), to reflect on what has happened in the past ministry year and to prepare for where God is leading us as we move ahead. It has been a key event each and every year since 2012. It's strategically timed because of how our ministry calendar works (September to August) - we are ending one year and preparing to launch another. That makes this a fantastic night to celebrate what God has been doing within our church family and



try to align ourselves with His agenda and plans for what is ahead for Southland. Of course, a big part of the value of the evening is the time simply to enjoy being together as church family. In fact, we will build into the evening some time for intentional connecting. We want to continue incorporating this valuable sense of being together into this night.



There are aspects of FLOURISH that do make it best for us to get RSVP's for the evening. Because we share a meal together, we need to know how many are coming; the same is true with



planning childcare. So, please take a moment to let us know if you are coming or not ("YES" or "NO" - either way). You can do that starting Sunday, August 3 in the foyer. It can also be done electronically using this link - <https://gosouthland.churchcenter.com/people/forms/1015846>, a link that's available on our Facebook page as well - "The Southland Scoop."

*We're looking forward to the evening and hope you can join us
for the time together as a church FAMILY!*

A New MINISTRY YEAR Launches in Late August/Early September

The end of August into the beginning of September is an important time within the Southland FAMILY as we move into a new ministry year. It's an exciting time of getting back into the swing of things. Just as with schools and the football season, it's a kick-off time for us at Southland - a re-launching as we resume much of our normal ministry calendar after a break over the Summer. See various sections throughout this edition of "The Vine" for what that looks like within our ministries (we have also included a list of kick-off dates on page 6 with the calendar). Overall, it's a great time to become a part of what's happening within the church family!

As we head into this new ministry year, please make sure you're staying tuned-in to "The Vine" as well as "The Southland Scoop" Facebook page for all the details about what is happening in the life of the Southland family! Next month, we'll share dates for big events in the rest of 2025.

A note about "First Sunday CONNECTIONS"

For the past year, we have occasionally hosted these times (on "first Sundays" of the month, obviously) for people simply to make connections with others - to bolster existing relationships and/or perhaps to establish new ones. Due to the schedule over recent months, it's been awhile since we've had one of these. That continues to be the case into August - with the post-VBS donuts/coffee fellowship time at 9:30am on Sunday, 8/3. We will, however, resume our "First Sunday CONNECTIONS" on September 7.



A Note about Southland Leadership



Each Summer, we go through a process designed to help us identify potential new elders. As with any group (e.g. a company/organization, family, sports team, etc.), the leadership of a church family certainly matters, and the role of elder is a key part of God's design. Every church has its own method for choosing leadership. You can check out previous editions of "The Vine" for more details about how



we do it here at Southland. Ultimately, we want this to be an opportunity for us to be in step with the Holy Spirit's leading as we seek His guidance in this process. We use this space in "The Vine" to communicate information about how it works and to provide updates re: our progress.

Earlier this Summer, we provided an opportunity for Southland members to recommend names for consideration. Of the five names originally submitted, three have chosen to continue on in this process at this point, including an "interview" with the current elders. At some point in August, we'll share the list of elders moving forward; *this is not done for a "yes" or "no" vote, but to give the congregation an opportunity to raise any Biblical concerns re: those being recommended for this role.* From there, new elders will be "ordained" at our annual FLOURISH gathering in late August to begin serving in this role as we start a new ministry year in September. We'll continue to keep you updated on how all of this unfolds.

As a reminder, this overall process is designed to help us - both those recommended for this role and the existing leadership - discern God's direction in this matter. Throughout it all, we are trying to align ourselves with Him as we strive to recognize those men that *He* is calling to serve in this vital role of leadership in the Southland family. Underneath any such human process in place for a local congregation, ultimately, it's about those He appoints (see Acts 20:28). Of course, as we seek the Spirit's leading on this matter, prayer is a necessary part of this process too. In the midst of it all, we do ask the Southland family to be praying along with us.

Elders currently serving: *Ernie Emmerton, Ben Jennings, Pat Little, Terry Ochs and Bob Wood. In September, Pat will begin a "sabbatical" (a required year-off after serving 6 consecutive years).*

As Lead Pastor, Matt is also considered a part of the elder team.

In the last two editions of "The Vine," we've shared the elder portion of our "Leadership Covenant" as well as those commitments made by elders and staff. In this edition, we have highlighted the commitments made specifically by staff (see the "WE DO!" section on page 7).

Scholarship Update:

This is now the fifth year we have offered a scholarship in memory of Warren Burros, a long-time elder at Southland who passed away in April of 2020. His company decided to honor and reflect his legacy by contributing toward a scholarship fund that we would run. It's exclusively designed to bless and benefit high school graduates from within our Southland family.

This year, we had five applicants/recipients. We take a picture of them to send to Warren's former employers. (They'll also be updating the plaque for the foyer as well.) We thought it appropriate to share with you as well.

Pictured from left-to-right: Libbey Baadsgaard, Luke Jennings, Levi Randleman, Nate Martin and Madison Lillard.

Congratulations to them on receiving this scholarship award! We are certainly grateful for this opportunity to further Warren's legacy as part of this church family!



Some Technology Tools for the Southland Family



CHURCH CENTER by Planning Center ... This tool provides an online directory that those who have signed-up can access through a secure log-in and password (<https://people.planningcenteronline.com/>). This is also an app - "Church Center."

It's a great tool for us to maintain connections with others in the Southland family. It also allows each individual person with access to manage their own contact information as that needs to be updated. We also use the e-mail platform within the "PEOPLE" portion - for sharing both general information and prayer requests. Let us know if you're not receiving these.

FACEBOOK, including "The Southland Scoop" ... We have a general Facebook page that is public/visible for sharing some basic information about us more broadly (e.g. this is what we use for putting out our weekly live stream as well - see page 14). *We also have a page called "The Southland Scoop."* We use this more "internal" page to share more specific church family-related information: pictures from recent events (like Move, the Guatemala mission trip and VBS), reminders, announcements, updates, etc. If you're on Facebook and not a part of "The Scoop" already, we encourage you to get connected in this way.



OTHER GENERAL REMINDERS & INFO

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 July 2025

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: June monthly tithe = \$30,372⁰⁰ (4 Sundays) Average weekly tithe = \$7,593⁶⁰

At this point in our fiscal/ministry year (September 2024 onward), our tithe is \$437,006 for an average of around \$9,100/week ... that projects at this point to around \$482,000 for the year.

Our budget for this ministry year puts us needing in the \$470,000 range - a slight increase over our previous ministry year's total. At this point (factoring-in where we are and what Summer has traditionally looked like), *it is reasonable to project right around there, even with a conservative projection for August, the last month.* Added to that, we started this ministry year in a good spot ... with some levels of reserves. It all puts us in a good financial position for now. ***Thank you for your ongoing faithful giving to Southland!*** Still, we 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."***

Regardless of where exactly we are relative to our projected budget, Southland's leadership continues to work to manage our overall situation 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 back to regular CONNECT Groups for adults - Sunday School classes for all kids and youth as well. See pages 14-15 for more specifics (not meeting on Sundays, August 3 and 31).



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. See page 14 for specifics.

Weekly ministries on a break over the Summer: Group Huddle for middle school/high school youth + Wednesday evening CULTIVATE + Thursday AM WSA/Ladies’ Bible Study. *These will be resuming later this August and into September; see below for more details on when exactly that will be happening for each one.*

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.

Sunday, August 3 ... here’s how we’ll wrap-up VBS week: a time of fellowship at 9:30 (donuts, etc. will be served); then, after singing a couple of VBS songs in our ENCOUNTER service at 10:30, kids will go through day #5 of the VBS curriculum during their Kid ENCOUNTER time (ages 4 and up all together - see page 9 for more).

Sunday, August 3 ... starting this week, you can RSVP for our annual FLOURISH event.

Wednesday, August 20 at 6pm ... a meeting for D-Group facilitators as we prepare for a new semester/year of CULTIVATE.

Sunday, August 24 ... our 2025 FLOURISH gathering; see pages 2-3 for details.

Wednesday, August 27 ... the first night of CULTIVATE with ministry programming for all ages. *We’ll make available a flyer with more details sometime in mid-August.*

Thursday, August 28 ... the first meeting of WSA/Ladies’ Bible Study for the Fall session (see p. 13 for more on this).

Sunday, September 7 ... after several months without one, we’ll have another “First Sunday CONNECTION” at 10am (9:15am groups/classes still meet, just with an earlier end time).

Sunday, September 7 after our ENCOUNTER time ... our student ministries will be having an informational meeting for parents (for students of all ages, K through high school - see p. 9).

Sunday, September 7 at 4:30pm ... Group Huddle kick-off event for the new year (done at 8).

Saturday, September 13 ... The Pregnancy Care Center’s annual “Walk for Life” event; see page 18 for a link to more details.

Saturday, September 13 ... CCH’s annual golf tournament to support their mission trips; see page 18 for a link to more details.

Sunday, September 14 at 6pm ... normal Group Huddle resumes.

By the next edition of “The Vine,” we will have much more set in stone calendar-wise as we move toward the rest of 2025. We want you to have those dates as early as possible.



REMEMBERING OUR COVENANT COMMITMENTS

*One of the great privileges and joys of following Jesus is being joined together with other believers as His church. Here at Southland, we express that vital connection in part through our “**Membership Covenant.**” It provides the basic parameters for belonging to the church family here – the commitments we have made to Christ and one another as His people. This covenant is our attempt to communicate the teaching of God’s Word when it comes to His Church. Just what is required of us to belong to one another here?*

*As with any other area, we believe that leadership should set the pace – **it’s to be a higher level of responsibility.** That’s why a significant part of our covenant deals with the commitments made by SCC leaders. In conjunction with our annual process of considering new elders (see pp. 3–4 for the most recent update), this is a good time of year overall to share these. In the June edition, we identified the specific commitments made by SCC elders in their unique leadership role. In the July edition, we highlighted those commitments made by elders and staff together. So, it seems fitting for us to use this space in this edition to share the staff commitments – what have SCC staff members committed themselves to as part of the leadership here? We have provided a list in the space below. Again, as a reminder, these are in addition to the commitments made by both elders and staff in the “general commitments” section.*

Staff COMMITMENTS – made by ministry staff as part of the leadership team:

- ♦ *We covenant to embrace the direction and priorities established by the elders, affirming the unique place of leadership God has entrusted to them.*
- ♦ *We covenant to seek the Holy Spirit’s guidance for how we creatively implement His plans in our specific areas of ministry.*
- ♦ *We covenant to partner with other staff members, functioning as a unified team for both greater effectiveness and, more importantly, God’s glory.*
- ♦ *We covenant to work with volunteer ministry leaders and other staff in designing and effectively implementing the work of ministry here.*
- ♦ *We covenant to set the pace for ministry at Southland, being out on the front lines as servant-leaders carrying-out the special work He has given and gifted each of us to do.*
- ♦ *We covenant to demonstrate the effort appropriate for servants of Christ investing ourselves in eternally significant work (e.g. the right heart, commitment, humility, etc.).*
- ♦ *We covenant to be “workers worth our keep” (see Matthew 10:10) so that through our faithful, diligent service we earn the financial compensation we receive.*
- ♦ *We covenant to be faithful in how we handle the day-to-day operations of Southland Christian Church, living out Kingdom values such as integrity and excellence.*

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. For the Summer months, we are combining our grade school ages (K-5th grade) during this time slot.

CHILDREN'S
Sunday School

We have an adjusted 9:15am schedule for the following days coming up: August 3 (a fellowship time with donuts/coffee to wrap-up our 2025 VBS week at 9:30am) and August 31 (nothing at 9:15am, part of Labor Day weekend); otherwise, classes are meeting as normal during August and will be moving forward into September.

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

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

A Reminder: As mentioned last month, we are excited about an adjustment in this area. We've added a section for 2 & 3 year-olds (no longer just in the nursery) in addition to allowing more flexibility as students (especially 1st graders) transition from "Li'l Kid ENCOUNTER" to regular "Kid ENCOUNTER."

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

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 AUGUST



Kid ENCOUNTER is now using newer material from Answers in Genesis (we used their VBS curriculum for the past few years). Each Sunday, students dive-in to God's Word, put Scripture in their hearts and learn how it applies to their everyday lives. This includes a memory verse each week as well. As is typical for AIG, there is even an "apologetics" emphasis attached to the content.

A note specifically about August 3: Kid Encounter will be extended - joined with the younger kids as well - as we wrap-up our VBS curriculum with Day #5. All kids will start in the auditorium to sing a couple of songs from the week before heading down the hall.

Our 2025 VBS is now behind us - a Look Back



VBS 2025 was another great week as kids had fun while learning about Jesus - being filled with WONDER because of Him! The kids discovered God's creation, made crafts, experienced science, learned through lessons (with a nightly memory verse), heard about missions, played games, enjoyed snacks and even rode a small train. It was another great week for those who participated - an average of over 70 kids total!

One of the highlights of the week was our offering for our partners in North Africa. ***We raised over \$1,250 during the week; way to go, kids (and parents + others too)!***

Make sure you check out "The Southland Scoop" Facebook page for some pictures from the week. *We will also share a specially made VBS video on Sunday, August 3.*

A reminder about Sunday, August 3 as we wrap-up and celebrate VBS - three specifics: (1) a fellowship time with donuts and coffee, etc. at 9:30am (no normal 9:15am classes/groups this day) ... (2) kids are singing a couple of VBS songs toward the beginning of service at 10:30am ... (3) they will then be dismissed to the Great Room for VBS day #5 (kids ages 4 through 5th grade are combined for this time).

See pages 16-17 for a list of the volunteers who helped make our 2025 VBS happen (in addition to so many people who donated items for the week); thank you to all of you!

FALL 2025 Wednesday evening CULTIVATE Plans for Kids

During the Fall Cultivate session (re-launches on August 27), our kids ages 4 and up participate in "Children of Praise." They'll be spending Wednesday evenings rehearsing songs, practicing drama and more, all in preparation for their annual Christmas performance (*the program date is not yet set*). We are grateful for Jessica and her team of volunteers (including some new ones!) who have stepped-up to lead our kids for this. We'll share more details on this year's program - called "Angel Alert!" - in the future; for now, we hope your kids plan on being a part of this.



An Upcoming Event for kids 4th through 6th grades:

C.I.Y. has moved up its "Super Start" even in Tulsa for next year - to January 30-31, 2026 (it's typically been in March). This has become a fun event in our kids' ministry. Because of the change in timing, ***Jessica will need to know by October 12 who wants to go - both kids and parents interested in going as sponsors.*** We'll share more in the months to come.

INFO APPLICABLE TO ALL KIDS/YOUTH



Attention PARENTS of kids entering Kindergarten and older ... our student ministries are having an informational meeting on **Sunday, September 7 at noon** (after service). It's a time to share about the year ahead and take care of some logistics like liability forms for the year. **Please plan to be there!**

GROUP HUDDLE NEWS

Group Huddle for middle school and high school students does not meet over the Summer. As we head into August, though, it's a good time to start looking ahead to the upcoming year (yes, even though that also means thinking about the start of the new school year too!).

Due to the timing of things during this season (our church-wide FLOURISH event on Sunday, August 24 plus Labor Day weekend that impacts Sunday, August 31), the start of the Group Huddle year is a bit delayed again.

"Group Huddle Kick-off" at Incredible Pizza

Sunday, September 7 from 4:30-8pm



It's time to kick-off a new Group Huddle year and we know just the place to release your back-to-school excitement! Incredible Pizza is offering another great deal to our group. **For a cost of \$25/student**, everyone can enjoy the all-you-care-to-eat buffet, have a game card for playing on some of the newest arcade games in the area *and* be able to enjoy some of their attractions - laser tag, bumper cars, and go carts. Make plans to come and join us for this fun, memorable night as we kick-off a new year!

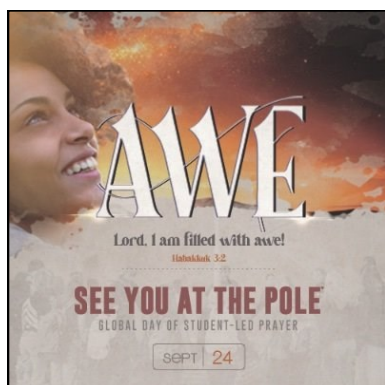
After the kick-off event, normal Group Huddle resumes Sunday, September 14 (6-8pm).

Be looking for details about this upcoming semester (e.g. the theme, mission partner for the year, etc.) in the youth planner and the next edition of "The Vine."

FOR MS/HS STUDENTS

SUNDAY SCHOOL (starts at 9:15am on Sunday mornings): We have separate Sunday School classes for our middle school and high school youth. The middle school class meets in Room #7; the high school class meets in Room #6. **These are meeting as normal on August 10, 17 and 24, but not August 3 or 31 (see elsewhere for plans re: these two days).**

Wednesday Evening CULTIVATE - resumes on August 27. We'll share specific details about this in a mid-August flyer and in the next edition of "The Vine."



"See You at the Pole" 2025

**Wednesday, September 24 - 1 hour
before classes start at your school's flagpole**

This is an annual gathering for prayer, Scripture reading and worship before classes start. Set your alarms early and meet at your school's flagpole to pray for your campus, teachers and peers. Don't miss this opportunity to be a part of the largest student-led prayer movement around the world!

H.S. STUDENTS - MOVE FOLLOW-UP

Thanks to the support and prayers of the Southland family, the 2025 MOVE conference was another incredible experience for our high school students and their sponsors. This year, the group went to a new location - Kansas University (in Lawrence). In addition to the picture of the group to the right, we've shared some reflections from a couple of our students who attended.

It's a great way to follow-up on this great experience!



move move move move move move

From Libbey Baadsgaard (graduated high school senior)

MOVE is a 5-day church camp for high school students on a college campus. It's a week filled with powerful worship, sermons, crazy costumes, laughter, and tears. I've been blessed to spend the past 5 years at this camp, and God has used it to work on growing my faith. This year's theme was "In Between" which represents the life we have between the time we are born and through our life with God in eternity. Our life on earth is only a small portion of forever with God, and we choose how we will live it. Where will we look when life gets difficult? Who am I called to be? As we live our lives in the "In Between," God gives us our identity in Him and tells us to keep our eyes fixed on Him.

Throughout the week, we walked through the book of Hebrews. This book is a call to remain faithful to God and have endurance. Every day, the speakers had compelling messages, and my favorite was from Night 3. Beth DeFazio shared from Hebrews 10, which is about Christ's sacrifice for us. He is the one sacrifice for all time, and He tore the veil to make the old new. Something that stuck with me in her message was when she talked about how there are those of us who think we can earn our salvation. She said, *"If you try to enter the holy place without the blood of Jesus, you are cooked."* I fall into that trap sometimes, and it's a great reminder that it's not about us, it's about HIM. That night, we had the chance to dedicate our lives to Christ for the first time or rededicate them. I chose to rededicate my life to Him and to represent that, I tore a piece of fabric in two. One piece was tied on the rope to be left behind to symbolize the old life, and I tied the other on my wrist to represent the new.

The worship at MOVE is incredibly touching. The songs were different this year, but by the end of the week, they held such a special place in my heart during my time in the presence of the Lord. There is nothing like praising God in a place with hundreds of people and declaring his name for who He is. One night in particular, I was so moved I had to stop singing and bask in his glory. I imagined how wonderful heaven would be with everyone crying out, "Holy." I couldn't help but lift my hands in the air and dance when it was time to worship. Praise God, I am saved. Death has been defeated, and I've been born again.

MOVE wouldn't be the same without such incredible leaders and friends. Zoey and I twinned one day as cowgirls, and we tricked some people because we looked so similar. Kale's van was an adventure, that's for sure. Every time we got done with small groups, he would step on the gas and circle the parking lot. I



feared for my life every time while everyone else was hollering. Levi “infracted” Les one day for being an amazing youth leader, which was the only infraction for something good during the week. He is the best youth Pastor, and I don’t know how he manages this event every year, making the activities a blast and being there to talk about our struggles and faith. All the leaders were so incredible, setting a great example.

MOVE has been so valuable in my life. MOVE is a place where you come with burdens and you leave feeling lighter. God demonstrated that He is greater than my doubt, my anxiety, my sin, and my brokenness. He took that weight off my shoulders and helped me encounter Him for who He is.

move move move move move move

From Zoey Smith (incoming high school senior)

Nothing could have prepared me for what was going to happen at Move. My life was going to change forever, and I wouldn’t have it any other way. There is nothing better than getting away from life, and being with like-minded people. At Move, the people want the best for you, and most of all they want you to grow in your walk with Christ. So if you are struggling, lost, broken, and want to have a relationship with Jesus come to Move.

My experience at Move starts in the vehicle. There was nothing special about it. I talked with old and new friends, and we played many games. This was a great time to laugh, and get to know others. It helped me create bonds that I hope will last a lifetime. Once we arrived on the KU campus, I quickly noticed it’s beauty - the hills, the trees, and the sky. Although the campus had some flaws I just wanted to focus on the beauty of it all.

The first main session was amazing. The worship and speaker communicated everything that I needed to hear. Little did I know that each night it would continue to get even better. Every day we would watch “**Kingdom Worker**” videos. The people highlighted in these productions shared their stories, and how God changed their lives. This was inspiring and made me feel less alone in my struggles. Just like the people in the “**Kingdom Worker**” videos, God gave me the courage to share my story with others. It has brought me closer to those people.

After each main session there was always a decision to make, and I loved seeing all the people in the room being brave and making those bold decisions. My first time at Move I made the decision to dedicate my life to God. I was lost, broken, and ashamed, but God met me at that summer Move Conference and made me feel redeemed. Now I want to help others grow in their faith, and show them that there is hope. I want people to feel welcomed, and know that they are not alone. I want to show them God's great love, and help them understand how deeply He cares for them. I never want anyone to go through what I went through, but when I hear that they are hurting my heart hurts for them. This brought me to make the biggest decision of my life.

On Thursday night the president of Christ In Youth shared a passionate message. He stressed the need for more vocational ministry workers. This was the push I needed to dedicate my life to working for the church. That night my friends shared their stories with me, and I shared mine with them. They were struggling like me, and I loved being able to help them through their woes. Finding the lost, broken, helping them through their hurt is what God has called me to do, and this is what I want to do. Not for my glory, but for His.

Southland Women

A Look Back to Our Summer Ladies' Lunches

This was our third Summer of Ladies Lunches and, as with last year, I think they were a big success!

Thank you to each of you who attended and shared in the time to get to know one another better. We are made for community, and times like these to visit and share are prime times to make connections with other women. I hope you'll participate in our Women's Ministry activities each time you are able to!

♥ Kristie

As we move toward a new ministry year in the Southland family (it begins in September), plans are in the works for what's coming within our Women's Ministry. For now, we want to share the information we have ... more to follow.



After not meeting over the Summer, we're moving toward a new semester of WSA. 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 (designed for "CONNECTING" and/or "GROWING DEEP").

**Starting Thursday, August 28, WSA meets at 10am
in Room #6; we finish around noon each week.**

We're still working through the curriculum plans for this upcoming semester. Kristie will either communicate that in advance (especially to those who had been coming last year) or you can show up on the 28th and find out from there!

One of our sub-ministries within the women's ministry is a "Meal Team Ministry." It's a church-wide way that the Southland family can bless someone at a poignant time of life. **We are currently in need of more people to serve as part of these teams.** If you want to be a part of one of these meal teams, please use one of the blue "BUILD UP" cards in the foyer and write "meal team" on it.





WEEKLY ENCOUNTER

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

Our Upcoming Preaching Calendar

We'll wrap-up our series called "Jesus is ..." early in August. From there, we'll have a different rhythm through the rest of the month with more loosely connected messages. Once we get into September, we'll launch into our main Fall 2025 series; we'll share more on that as we move toward that point.



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. Whatever the reason you are not able to be present (*especially as we wrap-up the Summer months*), you can still stay connected to your church family this way.

Using this for our live stream also means that past services remain available on our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/gosouthland> ... they should still be accessible at this location even without an account). If you missed a week and want to catch-up, you can do so there.



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.**

CONNECT GROUPS

... a place to discover Christian community.



One of our priorities here at Southland is to provide a context where relational *family-like connections* can develop. Because it's a prominent theme in the New Testament, we emphasize it within our process statement as a key way we can grow and be equipped in faith. That's a big part of what our CONNECT Groups are about - a small group relational setting for **reflecting on God's Word** and **praying together**.

Currently, we're in our "regular" Connect Groups; **they meet at 9:15am on Sundays except the days noted on the next page** (note: we do have Sunday School classes for all ages of kids/youth as well at this time). Stop by the Welcome Center for a flyer with more information about these groups. Even during the more sporadic Summer months, we encourage you to CONNECT with others in the Southland family. *Please don't hesitate to ask if you need help deciding which group is best for you; we'd love to help you get connected.*

As a heads-up, we're in the planning stages as we look to strengthen our CONNECT Group offerings in the Fall. Be watching for more information coming as we move toward September!



Some upcoming schedule adjustments at 9:15am (meeting as normal otherwise):

Sunday, August 3 As has become our tradition, we celebrate the VBS week on this Sunday. *That includes a time of fellowship with donuts, etc. at 9:30am.* It's a good, relaxing way to wrap-up a busy week and to invite guests from the week to join us.

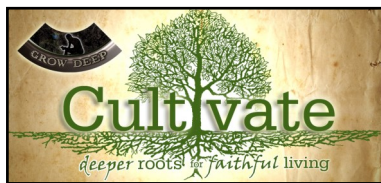
Sunday, August 31 *NO 9:15am groups/classes again (part of Labor Day weekend this year)*

See page 3 for more on an upcoming "First Sunday CONNECTION."

GROW DEEP MINISTRIES



... an opportunity to plant deep roots in Jesus and God's Word.



The Fall 2025 semester re-launches on Wednesday, August 27. Sometime in August, we'll share details about our plans, including for another round of D-Groups. *We hope you join us!*



OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD UP

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

Opportunities to Serve & "BUILD UP" the Body

We use this space to share some specific ways we need volunteers. Just like any FAMILY, we function as we do *because of the willing-hearted servants* who choose to embrace opportunities to BUILD UP others through serving. Especially as we move toward a new ministry year in September, there are several ongoing ways where you can get involved. See the blue flyer at the display by the Welcome Center for more about these opportunities.

If there are such ways in which you are willing to serve, please let one of our staff members know and we'll get you plugged-in to that.

We have several volunteers that we need to make sure we recognize in this section of "The Vine" ... so many, that we need some of the next pages as well (especially with VBS)!



A **"THANK YOU"** to those who served as 2025 "MOVE" sponsors: **Andrea Conboy, AJ & Terra Gegg, Kale Kilgo, Les Londeen, Tim Swadley and Ashley Worthy.** We so appreciate the time you invested in our high school students for this week!

Our 2025 VBS (**“Wonder Junction”**) is officially in the books. It makes this edition of “The Vine” an appropriate time to extend a tremendous **“THANK YOU!”** to all of those who were a part of making it a success; there are certainly many people (our apologies if we’ve left someone out)! It’s what makes this kind of week possible. In fact, it’s a great picture of the **“BUILD UP”** idea: *many parts functioning as one team to accomplish a common goal.*

“THANK YOU” to **Sean & Megan Falconer, Stef/Ray Hall, Gavin & Aimee Harnstrom, Les Londeen, Doris Piedlow, Lex Randleman, Niki Short, Aiden Simpson, Mark Wilcox, Chris & Christine Williams** (Jessica’s parents who spent several hours volunteering the week before VBS) and **the Young family** for helping to decorate/get the building ready for the week. *A special “shout out” to the Wednesday night Cultivate youth for helping on some décor projects back in the Spring as well!*

Of course, we do want to say **“THANK YOU!”** to those who gave donations (financial or supplies); your generosity certainly is a blessing that helped make the week happen!

“THANK YOU” to **Kristie Martin** along with help from **Cheryl Boland** (making desserts for the meals), **Carol Ricke** - with extra help from **Olivia Stenger** also on Wednesday - and **Jessica Young** for providing pre-VBS meals for volunteers. It’s a great blessing to have these available for those who are serving.

“THANK YOU” to those who led the opening (including the pre-VBS portion) and closing: **Jamie Brown** (music), **Les Londeen** (pre-VBS portion), **Harmony Martin** (pre-VBS portion/music) and **Jessica Young**

“THANK YOU” to **Aiden Simpson** and **Dylan Young** for their tech help (sound, lights, etc.).

“THANK YOU” to our partners in North Africa for providing videos about their family, their country and their work to share with our kids each night.

“THANK YOU” to those who served in the Pre-K/K portion of VBS: **Sandy Arneson** (puppet help), **Amanda Butler, Megan Falconer, Gavin & Aimee Harnstrom, Isabelle Lillard, Harmony Martin, Kristie Martin, Anna Moore** and **Olivia Stenger**.

“THANK YOU” to those who served in the various grade school rotations:

Donna Lillard for organizing the lesson rotation as well as our other teachers: **Jamie Brown, Sean Falconer** and **Rick Randleman**.

Stefani Hall for leading the memory work time.

Stella Falconer, Brenda Ochs and **Anna Randleman** for leading the crafts with some pre-VBS help in getting things ready from **Sean Falconer** and **Terry Ochs**.

Darrell & Lisa Deckard for leading the science experiment station.

Talia Stone, Kaye Pilkenton and **Carol Ricke** for handling snacks (all ages).

Dylan Young, Thomas Hall and **Douglas Arnold** for leading games (all ages).

“THANK YOU” to all of the crew leaders who led the grade school kids to their stations and made this a great experience for the kids: **Jamie Brown, Jay Butler, Marshall Gunter, Ray Hall, Madison Lillard, Nate Martin, Luis & Tristan Martinez, Doris Piedlow, Aiden Simpson, Zoey Smith, Ella Wiley, Liz Wood, Grace Worthy** and **Lily Worthy**.

Over for more VBS “thank you’s”

(More “thank you’s” for VBS ...)

“**THANK YOU**” to **Les Londeen** who led a middle school section helped along the way by **Kristin Londeen, Carson Moore, Kira Smith** and **Kris Stone**.

“**THANK YOU**” to **Will & Ashley Deckard** and **Kristin Londeen** who served in the nursery to help with little ones of volunteers during the week.

“**THANK YOU**” to **Rick Randleman** and **Ashley Worthy** for handling registration and check-out each night - with an assist from **Levi Randleman** on Thursday.

“**THANK YOU**” to **Andy Lillard** for helping with security and check-out each night.

“**THANK YOU**” to **all who stuck around and helped with clean-up on Thursday**.

Finally, a big “**THANK YOU**” to **Jessica Young** for all her work in planning, organizing and leading VBS as well as all of the extra jobs she covered along the way; it’s great to have her serving in this role and all the ways she serves here at Southland!

SERVING SCHEDULE for August 2025

	Foyer Hosts (10:15 on, through whole service)	Greeters (at the doors from 10:15-10:40)	Serving Team Leader
8/3	Les & Kristin Londeen	<i>T.B.D. (no 9:15am groups/classes)</i>	Pat Little
8/10	Doug & Susan Graves	Gathering Room Connect Group	Mark Miller
8/17	Ben & Debbie Jennings	Great Room Connect Group	Ben Jennings
8/24	Pat & Debbie Little	“Voyage” Connect Group	Les Londeen
8/31	AJ & Terra Gegg	<i>T.B.D. (no 9:15am groups/classes)</i>	Les Londeen

	Nursery workers (all morning)	Wee Kid ENCOUNTER & Li'l Kid ENCOUNTER	Kid ENCOUNTER (1 st - 5 th grades)
8/3	Baadsgaard Family	<i>Kelsey S. & Olivia S. Anna M.</i>	Jessica Y. & Cary S.
8/10	Lillard Family	<i>Kristin L. & Ezri S. Harmony M.</i>	Falconers
8/17	Deckard Family	<i>Jessica Y. Kristie M.</i>	Halls
8/24	Harnstrom Family	<i>Jessica Y. Sandy A. & Becky K.</i>	Jamie B. & Anna R.
8/31	Wilcox Family	<i>Harmony M. Debbie H.</i>	Youngs

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

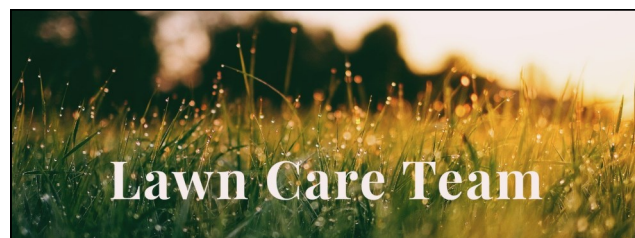
8/2 - Randleman

8/9 - Constantine/Wood

8/16 - Jennings

8/23 - Deckards

8/30 - Harnstrom/Randleman



LIVE OUT MINISTRIES



... a path for putting
faith into action.

Our local ministry partners:



www.occ.edu



Two upcoming “LIVE OUT” opportunities with and through our local ministry partners (with links to more information; unfortunately, both of these events are on the same day):

- ⇒ The Pregnancy Care Center’s annual “Walk for Life” fundraiser on **Saturday, September 13**. Here’s a link to their website with more details: <https://417pcc.org/events/25walk/>, including a way to register in advance to participate in the event. 
- ⇒ Christian Campus House’s annual golf tournament is also on **Saturday, September 13 (starts in the morning)** - this annual event helps CCH raise funds for their foreign mission trips, a key part of their ministry to students. Here’s a link to their website with more details, including a way to sign-up online and more specifics about how this event bolsters their ministry efforts: <https://cchonthe.net/golf-tournament-fundraiser/>.

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.” Check out www.indiamission.org for more information about some of the global Kingdom work we get to partner in here at Southland. You can also “like” their Facebook page for ongoing updates.

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.



Our 2025 Guatemala mission trip with Life of Hope took place in July. On Sunday, August 10, we’ll hear a brief report from the trip during our ENCOUNTER time (not as full of a presentation as in past years). We’re grateful for this partnership and for another opportunity for a Southland group to go participate with Life of Hope’s ministries!

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).