



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

The Southland Vine

For JANUARY 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.



May we experience God's blessings individually and collectively as we follow after Him into this new year!

Here at Southland, our ministries resume a more normal pace as we leave December behind and enter the new year. Check out the various sections of "The Vine" for plans and details as 2026 begins. We're looking forward to a great year ahead!

What's Inside:

- 2-3 **Southland FAMILY News**
- 3-5 **Other Info. + What's Happening at SCC (includes calendar)**
- 6-7 **Southland KIDS**
- 8-9 **GROUP HUDDLE WITH MS/HS NEWS**
- 10 **Southland Women and MEN**
- 11 **ENCOUNTER**
- 12 **CONNECT**
- 12-13 **GROW DEEP**
- 13-14 **BUILD UP (serving schedule)**
- 15 **LIVE OUT**

We plan to publish the next edition of *The Vine* in late January.

We're looking forward to Wednesday evening CULTIVATE resuming on January 7; see page 13 for details!

We hope you join us: meal served from 5:30-6:15 with ministry programming starting at 6:30.



Please note!

Due to the recent busy Christmas season, this edition of "The Vine" is a bit abbreviated (i.e. no staff articles). We did still feel like it was important to publish it so we could communicate about what's happening as we move into 2026. The next edition will be back to what is more normal.

Southland "FAMILY" News

A brief look back to the month of December:



A brief look back to December and our "Church FAMILY Christmas" ... It was another great month together as we celebrated the season as a church FAMILY. From another delicious "Thanks-Mas" family dinner on 12/7, to the special morning on 12/14 highlighted by our C.O.P. presentation of "Angel Alert," to caroling, to our Christmas Eve service, the whole month was filled with what have become great traditions for us as a church family.

We hope you had a blessed Christmas season ... and that being together with your church FAMILY helped make it so!

UPCOMING EVENTS for the Southland family:

**Our next "First Sunday CONNECTION" is
Sunday, January 4 at 10am (then February 1 also)**

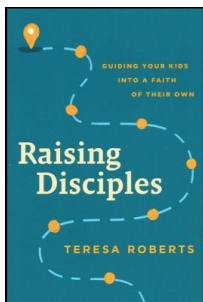
At Southland, we value **CONNECTING** with others within the church family; in fact, we identify this as a key priority that we believe is part of God's design for His people in Christ. It's why we have **CONNECT** Groups that meet each week (see p. 12). It's also why we have some opportunities throughout the year for experiencing and developing relationships with one another.



That's the goal behind these **"First Sunday CONNECTION"** times (our next one will be on Sunday, January 4, then another one on February 1). In the midst of everything else, we want to provide an informal time for making connections with others. We'll provide some simple breakfast items and coffee, but otherwise, there's nothing else we do besides providing the basic context for good conversation. We have regular 9:15am Connect Groups for adults/S.S. classes for kids and youth on these days, just dismissed earlier than normal. If you're not typically here with us in that time, we encourage you to join us on these days at 10am anyway for this time of **CONNECTING**.

NOTE: *Kids up through 5th grade will have their own time on these days, meeting in Rooms 1 and 2 (nursery-age kids will remain there during this time).*

The next special event for the whole church family is not for awhile; so there's not as much to advertise in this space. There is obviously still a lot happening with our regular ministry programming and within individual Southland ministries. Those ongoing ways are a great way to experience the goodness of our church family life.



An Upcoming Opportunity for Parents of Grade School Children and Younger - a special **CONNECT Group session (at 9:15am on Sunday mornings, starting on January 11) using the book *Raising Disciples* by Teresa Roberts. In Ephesians 6:4, Paul provides a foundational family command as he instructs parents to bring their children up in the Lord. That means helping them come to faith in Jesus, launching a lifelong journey following Him with a faith of their own. As of the publishing of this edition of "The Vine," we're still working out some of the details for this opportunity, but we look forward to providing this time for parents.**

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/>). There is also an app that goes with it too - "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 this resource to manage their own contact information as that needs to be updated. Additionally, we 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 for more on that). *We also have a page called "The Southland Scoop."* We use this more "internal" page to share church family-related information: pictures from recent events, reminders, announcements, updates, etc. If you're on Facebook and not a part of "The Scoop" already, we encourage you to find it and get connected with us there.



As we move into 2026, we want to bring attention to RightNow Media, an exciting ministry tool that we have available here at Southland.

Through our church account, *anyone connected to Southland* can have **FREE** access to the materials available. If you're not already set-up, click this link to do so: <https://app.rightnowmedia.org/join/gosouthland>.

OTHER GENERAL REMINDERS & INFO

IN THE EVENT OF INCLEMENT WEATHER ...

We are getting into that time of year when wintry weather can become a possibility. Unfortunately, there are times when we have to cancel or adjust our regular schedule as a result. These changes will be made as soon as reasonably possible (*we try to have a decision made at least two hours prior to start time*) and communicated in these main ways:

- ⇒ Through our "Southland Scoop" Facebook page.
- ⇒ Via e-mail through the "Planning Center: PEOPLE" lists we regularly use for sharing information.
- ⇒ We also make an attempt to call those who may not have such "electronic access." *Please do let the office know if you wish to be contacted in this way when weather requires a schedule change.*

We encourage you to check in these places for an official word from SCC if you're wondering about our plans on a particular day. *Of course, if you are in doubt at all about conditions or if circumstances make your travel unsafe, we certainly encourage you to use appropriate discretion regardless of our decision.*

NOTE: Even if conditions are not good because of weather, there is always the LIVE STREAM option for our ENCOUNTER time; see page 11 for a reminder of how and where to access that.



**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 December 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: December monthly tithe = \$56,936⁰⁰ (4 Sundays)* Average weekly tithe = \$14,324⁰⁰

Four months into this fiscal/ministry year-to-date (September 2025 onward), our tithe is \$164,036 for a weekly average of nearly \$9,650 ... at this point, this projects to a little over \$500,000 annually.

** As in past Decembers, some year-end giving has bolstered where we are at this point.*

We did finish the last ministry year in good spot overall, including some layers of reserve (*thank you for your ongoing faithful giving to Southland!*). At this point, we're right at the same pace as we were then - through August 2025 - when we finished at \$477,000. That being said, our budgeted tithe need has increased a bit so that we need in the \$480,000 range. We are in a good spot. Even still, we 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."

Regardless of where exactly we are, 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!

2025 GIVING RECEIPTS ... Receipts will be sent out in January. As has been the case recently, they'll come to you in a newer format (we've been using a different system for the past few years now). For many, they'll likely even arrive via e-mail. These receipts will include any means of giving (*i.e.* any donations/contributions that are not specific payments whatever the specific form, including via Tithe.ly). Once you receive your statement, please double-check it against your own records. If you discover a discrepancy, please make sure you let the office know and we will work to get it corrected. Also, if you don't receive a receipt by the end of January and need one, please let us know. *Thank you, again, for your faithful participation in giving!!*

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 12 for more specifics. We are back to our regular schedule as we get to January, including a "First Sunday CONNECTION" time at 10am on Sunday, 1/4.



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 11 for more information.



Sunday evenings (normally 6-8pm) ... Group Huddle for middle school and high school youth; *the new semester kicks-off on Sunday, January 11, then resumes as normal on Sunday, January 18.* See pages 8-9 for more details.

Wednesday evening CULTIVATE, a “GROW DEEP” ministry ... we resume on January 7 - 5:30 for dinner, 6:30 for ministry programming; find details and a link to more information about this semester on page 13 (D-Groups again for the 4 Wednesdays in January as we launch into a new semester).



Thursday mornings (10am start time) ... WSA - Ladies' Bible Study resumes on Thursday, January 8; see page 10. *As in the Fall, the plan is to use this time as another D-Group option for ladies (i.e. the same content as we're using during CULTIVATE on Wednesdays.*

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.

Thursday, January 1, 2026 ... “Happy new year!”

Sunday, January 4 ... our normal 9:15am programming resumes (see p. 12) *with a “First Sunday CONNECTION” at 10am as well* (see p. 2).

Wednesday, January 7 ... CULTIVATE resumes on Wednesday evenings (see p. 13).

Thursday, January 8 ... WSA (Ladies' Bible Study) resumes - 10am each week (see p. 10).

Sunday, January 11 ... Group Huddle kick-off from 4:30-8pm - bowling (see p. 8).

Sunday, January 18 ... Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. As part of this day, we highlight our partnership with the Pregnancy Care Center.

Sunday, January 18 ... “Open Hearts, Open Homes” lunch after service.

Sunday, January 18 ... a meeting for anyone interested in participating in our 2026 mission trip to Anapra, Mexico with *Casas por Cristo*; see page 15 for more.

Sunday, January 18 ... normal Group Huddle resumes; see pages 8-9 for information about this semester.

Tuesday, January 20 ... another worship night opportunity; see page 11 for specific details.

Sunday, January 25 ... the due date for the 2nd \$75 MOVE Conference deposit (see p. 9).

Friday, January 30-Saturday, January 31 ... “Super-Start” in Tulsa, OK for kids in 4th through 6th grades (see p. 7).

Friday, January 30-Saturday, January 31 ... men's conference at Northside CC (see p. 10).

February 1 ... another “First Sunday CONNECTION” at 10am.

February 20 ... kids' movie/game night; see page 7 for details.

In the next edition of “The Vine,” we'll share several dates that are connected to events usually in late Spring and Summer (e.g. our “LIVE OUT: Service Day,” the youth yard sale, camp sessions, VBS, etc.).

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 are back to normal for January, including a "First Sunday CONNECTION" at 10am on 1/4 (kids have their own time).

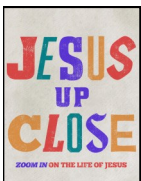
CHILDREN'S
Sunday School

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 in January.*



Kid ENCOUNTER is wrapping-up the Answers in Genesis curriculum in January (there are two lessons left in this journey through God's Word). After that, we'll be moving to a curriculum called "Jesus Up Close." These 12 lessons will "zoom in" on the life of Jesus - perhaps even some of the less familiar moments - as the Easter season draws near.

Children of Praise 2025 Wrap-up: "Angel Alert!"

We value this annual C.O.P. tradition at Southland and, once again, it was another great production back on December 14.

A Note from Jessica:

Thank you C.O.P. kids, parents and team for the time and energy you put into this year's program. The kids were amazing!*



* Check out page 14 for a "thank you" to those who served as part of the C.O.P. team. We're all grateful to the team and the kids for their work in making this happen!

Our Wednesday programming resumes January 7.

CULTIVATE KIDS

After spending the Fall in C.O.P. practices on Wednesday evenings, kids up through 5th grade - all middle school students are back with Les - have their own CULTIVATE programming. We have nursery for the youngest ones and a class for pre-K kids. K-5th grade students meet in the Fellowship Hall; Jessica leads this time, including a lesson series called "Dave Did!" focused on David (for the first week, this group will join the MS/HS youth for a night of games and fun).

CULTIVATE ministry programming meets from 6:30-7:45pm each week; check out page 13 for a link to information about what is happening on Wednesday evenings more broadly.

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

C.I.Y. "Super Start" in Tulsa, OK - January 30-31



This event is earlier in 2026 (typically, it's in March). As a result, we've already had to submit registrations - for both kids and parents who are interested in going as sponsors.

If you've missed that deadline, please talk to Jessica to see if there's still room.

A few reminders: Meals are covered through the \$85 payment already made.

We'll stay overnight at a church in Owasso, OK; you need to pack a sleeping bag, pillow, etc. in addition to clothes and bathroom supplies.

We leave at 2pm on Friday, and we plan to return at 8pm on Saturday.

An Upcoming Event for Kids (age 4 through 5th grade):



Kids' Game/Movie Night
Friday, February 20 from 5-8pm
for kids age 4 through 5th grade

We will meet in the Gathering Room - pizza included. Make sure you sign-up at the check-in counter or let Jessica know if you're coming. We're looking forward to a fun time together!

Our 2026 VBS - July 27-30

Summer may feel like a long way away, but as we turn the calendar to the new year, it's time to start thinking about our 2026 VBS. For now, we wanted to share the theme - it's focused on Psalm 23 - and get the dates out so you can put them on your calendars. As always, VBS is a great week for the kids because of all of those who volunteer to serve! We'll be sharing much more information along the way.



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. After a kick-off event on January 11, normal GROUP HUDDLE resumes on January 18 - see below for more details.

Upcoming Group Huddle Schedule:

Sunday, 1/11 Winter Kick-off from 4:30-8pm



Cost for bowling is \$10/student + money for fast-food supper.

"Let the good times roll with the winter youth kick-off." Roll on over and show us your skills. No matter if it's a gutter ball, a strike or a spare, we hope to see you there!

Sunday, 1/18 "Playoffs in Pajamas" - "Down, set, hut! ... show your support for your favorite NFL team.

Sunday, 1/25 "Lumberjack Flannels" - Look and smell like a real lumberjack; just remember to leave your ax at the door!

Sunday, 2/1 "Groundhog Disco" - Wear a tie-dyed shirt and play some groovy groundhog games.

Sunday, 2/8 *No Group Huddle - enjoy the Super Bowl with family and friends.*

GROUP HUDDLE Series for this semester: "The Way"

We are all on a journey. Some wander without direction. Some run towards success, comfort or control. Others don't even realize they're moving. But, every path leads somewhere, and every heart longs for the same things: truth, purpose and life that lasts. From the very beginning, there has only been one true Way: Jesus Christ. He doesn't just point to the Way - He is the Way. The life He offers isn't about empty religion or performance; it's about relationship. It's not a path we trek on our own, but one He's already walked for us and now walks with us.



GROUP HUDDLE MEALS:



Each semester, we ask parents to help defray the expense of feeding several hungry teens at Group Huddle. **We ask parents to send \$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).

As always, we need parent volunteers to help with meal preparation and clean-up throughout the semester; look for the sign-up sheet.

GROUP HUDDLE and CHILDREN'S MISSIONS:

Even into the new year, we're continuing to support **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. ***So far, we have raised over \$575!***



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).* **After a break through the end of December, we resume on Sunday, January 4 - there is a church-wide "First Sunday CONNECTION" at 10am on that morning as well.**

Wednesday Evening CULTIVATE (6:30-7:45 each week). ***We resume on January 7.*** After an opening night of games (combined with our younger kids), our middle school/high school youth will be using a Bible study called "**Why Not Now?**" as their content to start this semester. This curriculum challenges students to accept the calling to live like Jesus and participate in His mission even now, not just later. It does this by sharing stories of adolescents from the Bible and in modern life who did/are doing significant things for the Lord. *See page 13 for broader CULTIVATE details for this Winter/Spring semester.*

SPECIFICALLY FOR SENIOR HIGH ...



The High School "MOVE" Conference

**July 6-10 @ in Lincoln, Nebraska
(for the graduating classes of 2026-2030)**

Because these CIY conferences fill up quickly, we have already reserved spots based on an initial head count Les did back in the Fall (*i.e.* for both students and sponsors). There are often some changes to our list that we deal with as necessary/possible along the way. *Please let Les know ASAP if your previous answer has changed either way.*

A second pre-registration deposit of \$75 is due on Sunday, January 25.

As always, you can pay via check (payable to Southland Christian Church with "MOVE") in the memo line; *this can also be paid via Tithe.ly (see p. 4) by choosing the "MOVE Conference Payment" option ... as with any other payments such as this, we do ask that you cover any fees.*

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 tentatively set the dates for this year's sale: **Friday, May 1 & Saturday, May 2.** Be watching for more details about this in next month's edition of "The Vine" - *we'll start accepting donations in early March.*

Southland Women



After a break during the past several weeks, WSA resumes in early January (on 1/8). 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").

**WSA meets at 10am in Room #6 - finishing around noon each week;
see the note below for details about the content for this session of WSA.**

As in the Fall, we're again using our weekly WSA time as an additional D-Group opportunity (during our stretch of electives on Wednesday evenings - February through early March, WSA will use its own separate content). Among other benefits, this provides an opportunity for those who are unable to be involved on Wednesday nights ... perhaps even because they're serving elsewhere. Check out information about this semester's D-Group content on page 13 of "The Vine" or at the display in the foyer; you can also find a guide for each week's session there as well starting January 4 for the first week on January 8.

Southland MEN

We wanted to share information about a special upcoming conference opportunity for guys - hosted by Northside Christian Church (a "sister church"). We apologize for this being a bit late as the early registration deadline is the end of 2025; yet, we wanted to go ahead and make the details available.

**Friday, January 30 (registration at 5pm; the conference actually starts at 6pm - dinner included) and
Saturday, January 31 (breakfast at 7:30am with a main session at 8am - concludes late afternoon).**

Cost is \$95 if registering after January 1 (includes 3 meals)

To register, use the QR-Code in the image to the right or this link:

**[https://churchteams.com/m/
Register.asp?
a=dDcvKzJqUG05ck09](https://churchteams.com/m/Register.asp?a=dDcvKzJqUG05ck09)**



A key part of our ministry here at Southland involves Deeper Life Groups - a.k.a. "D-Groups" - on Wednesdays (see p. 13) and, as mentioned above, on Thursdays with WSA. These are also important expressions of our ministries to men and women here as these are normally gender-specific groups.



WEEKLY ENCOUNTER

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

A "Worship Night" at Southland Tuesday, January 20 from 6:30 - 7:45pm in the Great Room

We have these times - led by Kendall - as part of our broader worship ministry. These opportunities are specifically set aside for a music-centered worship experience. We hope you join us for this time as we encounter our Father in a different context, but still to express our praise and adoration!



Our Upcoming Preaching Calendar



To kick-off our sermon calendar in 2026, we'll be in a sermon series we're simply calling "**BLESSED!**" If it sounds familiar - and/or if the image looks familiar - it's actually the same basic way we started 2025. What better way to start a year than celebrating the blessings we experience from our Father in Heaven! This time, however, we move from the Psalms to the NT. In Christ, God's blessings continue to flow into our lives

- beyond even the general provision we experience as part of our Father's creation and the broader goodness of a life of faith (as in the Psalms). In fact, the NT regularly highlights the gracious blessings that come *specifically through our faith connection to Jesus*. Here's the catch, though: many times, these blessings are counter-intuitive as they exist more "beneath the surface" of life. Ultimately, being "BLESSED" in Christ actually comes *regardless of earthly, physical and circumstantial realities*. Yet, when we see through the eyes of faith, we grasp how truly and immensely **BLESSED** we are in Him!

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 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/@southlandccstreams>. If you missed a week and want to catch-up, they are accessible at this location.

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.**



YouVersion

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**.

As we launch into 2026, our **"regular" Connect Groups** are meeting (with some adjustments, see below); **they meet at 9:15am each Sunday** (note: we do have Sunday School classes for all ages of kids/youth as well during this time). There's a half-sheet flyer at the Welcome Center listing our current groups. *Please don't hesitate to ask if you need help deciding which group is best for you ; we'd love to help you find a place to connect as we move into the new year!*

During this upcoming stretch, there are no Sundays (at least into March or early April) when we are not having our regular schedule with 9:15am groups and classes.

Upcoming "First Sunday CONNECTIONS" at 10am - 1/4 + 2/1

As highlighted on page 2, we are hosting these opportunities for church-wide connection over breakfast items and coffee. Groups will be dismissed early on that day and we'll gather in the Fellowship Hall/foyer area for this informal time . Even if you're not normally a part of a group, we invite you to join us!

NOTE: *When we are hosting these, Jessica is also having a special CONNECTION time for kids - special breakfast treats for them to snack on and games; meeting in Rooms 1 and 2.*

Some Adjustments Starting January 11

We are offering a special parenting group starting January 11 (running through early March, most likely - see the bottom of page 2 for more on this opportunity). As a result, there will be impacts to some of our groups from then into early March - some combining of groups because of the content. We'll gather in our normal groups on the first Sunday of the month. At that time, as groups have the chance to re-connect, we'll also share more specific details about what is going to be happening during the upcoming stretch.



GROW DEEP MINISTRIES

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



**Wednesday evening
CULTIVATE - resumes
January 7, 2026**



After a break since before Thanksgiving, we resume with our Wednesday CULTIVATE programming on January 7. We have already shared a flyer with details about this upcoming session; you can find it through this link if you're viewing this electronically: [Winter/Spring 2026 Cultivate Session](#) (as always, paper copies of this flyer are also available in the foyer).

For adults, there are 3 mini-sessions this semester, starting with a D-Group session in the letter of 1 John for the 4 Wednesdays we're meeting in January. From there, we'll have a 6-week session with elective classes (we'll share specifics as we get closer to that) before our week-off for Spring Break. That is then followed by another D-Group session to wrap-up (6 weeks). Even if you haven't been able to join us this Fall, this re-launch is a great opportunity to get involved on Wednesday evenings.

As a reminder of the basic timing, a meal is served from 5:30-6:15 each week (the cost is still \$4/ person with a max of \$15/family) and then ministry programming *for all ages* from 6:30-7:45.

To help us prepare properly, we do ask for an RSVP if you're joining us this semester, but didn't in the Fall (*i.e.* either for a D-Group or for meals). You can do this at the display in the foyer or electronically through this link: <https://gosouthland.churchcenter.com/people/forms/1114518>.



OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD UP

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

Opportunities to Serve & "BUILD UP" the Body

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. Especially as we move into the new year of 2026, maybe it's a great time for you to find a way to either get involved in serving your church family or even stretch yourself with a new role.

At the Welcome Center, there are blue flyers identifying various areas in which we need volunteers. There are also blue "BUILD UP" cards that you can fill out and leave in one of the offering boxes (or give to a staff member) to let us know you want to get plugged-in to serving; we'll get in touch with you from there.

We encourage you to volunteer in one of these ministry areas; it would be a great "next step" to take both for the good of others and for your own benefit too!

See below and the next page for "Thank you's" from the Christmas season at Southland; it requires extra volunteer help and we are grateful for those who served!



A "thank you" to those who helped in the process of decorating the building for the 2025 Christmas season (including the reset afterwards): in addition to **Kristie** and **Les**, the following people helped with this: **Brenda Ochs, Pattie Sellers, Pam Sewell, Liz Wood** and **Jessica Young**. We appreciate your work in making things look so festive!

(See the next page for even more names from the Christmas season.)



A “**thank you**” to those who helped with our **Thanks-Mas** event back in early December:

- ♦ ... all of those - too many to mention - who helped with set-up/décor and clean-up.
- ♦ ... those who helped with the meal - as always, **Kristie** did a lot of the prep work and again this year, we had several who **smoked the pork**: **Rick** organized this part of the meal with help from **Jay Butler**, **Gavin Harnstrom**, **Ben Jennings**, **Carson Moore** and **Melissa Wilcox**. Thank you all for your delicious contributions!
- ♦ ... not to mention all the different ones who provided sides and/or a dessert.

We’re grateful for all of those who helped make this event happen!

An especially big “**thank you**” to the “**Children of Praise**” team led by **Jessica Young**, **Laci Bottorff** and **Tristan Martinez** along with **Talia Stone (throughout the Fall)**, **Madison Lillard (throughout the Fall)** and **Harmony Martin (toward the end)**. So much went in to making another fantastic program happen - they were working with the kids on Wednesday evenings from clear back when CULTIVATE launched. We’re especially grateful for their service in this way. Of course, a “**thank you**” to the kids as well for their efforts! There were also several involved from the tech end of things: **Aiden Simpson** and **Dylan Young** each week as well as **Karl Simpson** and **Mira Wilson** for the program itself.

Also, on that same day as the C.O.P. program, we had a breakfast at 9:30; a “**thank you**” to **Kristie** for leading in this effort and **to all the ladies who provided a casserole**.

One last Christmas-related note, “**thank you**” to those who helped spread Christmas cheer by caroling on Wednesday, December 17!

Again, throughout our celebration of the Christmas season at Southland, so many different people invested themselves above and beyond. As a church family, we were blessed by your service and most grateful for it!

SERVING SCHEDULE for January 2026

	Foyer Hosts (10:15 on, through whole service)	Greeters (at the doors from 10:15-10:40)	Serving Team Leader
1/4	Les & Kristin Londeen	<i>T.B.D. (First Sunday CONNECTION)</i>	Les Londeen
1/11	Pat & Debbie Little	Room #6 Connect Group	Doug Graves
1/18	A.J. & Terra Gegg	Great Room Connect Group	Deckard Family
1/25	Bob & Liz Wood	“The Voyage” Connect Group	Les Londeen

	Nursery workers (all morning)	Wee Kid ENCOUNTER & Li'l Kid ENCOUNTER	Kid ENCOUNTER (1 st - 5 th grades)
1/4	Harnstrom Family	Will & Ashley D. Harmony M.	Jessica Y. & Cary S.
1/11	Lillard Family	Ezri S. Sandy A./Becky K.	Falconers
1/18	Graves Family	Harmony M. Kristie M.	Halls
1/25	Wilcox Family	Jamie B./Anna R. Debbie H.	Youngs

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Two Special Days Upcoming:

On Sunday, January 18, we will again be recognizing “Sanctity of Human Life Sunday” - a day to affirm our commitment to the value and dignity of human life as created by God. Part of this day includes an opportunity to highlight our partnership with the Pregnancy Care Center and their ministry.

Just a heads-up for down the road: One of our favorite days on the calendar at Southland is what we call our “LIVE OUT: Service Day.” For several years now, it’s been a day for us church-wide to be intentional about focusing on SERVICE - living out an active love. *We are looking again at a date in early May for this in 2026 (tentatively, May 3); we’re looking forward to another day of 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 - perhaps the start of a new year is a great time to start something like this. For more details and/or to sign-up, check out their website (click on the “Child Sponsorship” tab).



A Future 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 family. See Rick’s article for more on this.

Rick is hosting an informational meeting in January (after service on Sunday, 1/18) when he will be sharing more details about the trip as a whole. It’s a great way to learn more about this opportunity and ask any questions you might have. If you are at all interested, we encourage you to attend.