



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

The Southland Vine

For JUNE 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.



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



Summer 2026 has arrived!

There is a lot we are looking forward to in the next few months at Southland: a picnic, church camp, the MOVE Conference, ladies' events, a mission trip, VBS and much more. Check out all of the details in this edition of "The Vine!"

Southland
**FAMILY
PICNIC**



See pages 2-3 for picnic-related info; we hope you join us for this family time!

JUNE 7 at **5pm** **Living Memorial Park**
4323 S. Nature Center Way - Springfield 65804

Southland "FAMILY" News

A Couple of Broader "Thank You's" to the Southland Family:



A "Thank you!" to all who participated in our 2026 "LIVE OUT: Service Day" in early May (see page 19 for more on this day). After a different 2025 when we partnered with Lifeline Christian Mission for a food pack, it was great to be back to various service projects. Both expressions of service have great value. Of course, part of what's great about the day is the sense of FAMILY that comes from serving *together* as church family - across the generations. Coming back together for lunch afterwards certainly helped as well. Once again, the day was a FAMILY highlight of the year!

Also, a big "Thank you!" to the Southland family for your support - once again - in making the youth yard sale fundraiser such a success. This year, the sale raised over \$3,100. That helps with the group going to the MOVE Conference in Nebraska this year. Whether you donated items for the sale or purchased items during it - or, did both, preferably not donating *and* buying the same item - we are grateful for your participation! See page 18 for a list of individuals who helped with the sale even though they aren't going as a sponsor and don't have students attending MOVE.



UPCOMING EVENTS for the Southland family:

Throughout this edition of "The Vine," we continue to share about several key upcoming events - some for the whole Southland family and others within our ministries for specific groups. 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 occasionally host these times - on "first Sundays" of the month, obviously - for making connections with others - to bolster existing relationships and/or perhaps to establish new ones. However, due to the recent and upcoming schedule of things (*e.g.*, other plans with Easter on 4/5 and "LIVE OUT: Service Day" on 5/4 + the picnic on the evening of 6/7 as a fellowship opportunity + no groups/classes on 7/5 for the 4th of July weekend), we don't have a next one planned at this time.



Our annual Southland FAMILY Picnic:

**Sunday, June 7 from 5pm to whenever
... held again at Living Memorial Park in
SE Springfield (4323 S. Nature Center Way)**

The picnic is an opportunity to come enjoy a meal and some time with others in a relaxed environment - a time of food, fellowship and fun with one another. There's no specific structured plans besides the meal, just being together. We have been sharing details - in the last edition of "The Vine" and in an info postcard on Sunday mornings, but here they are again as well (on the next page):



What the church is providing: Grilled hamburgers/hot dogs, buns & fixings + single-serving bags of chips + drinks, paper products, utensils, etc.

What we need you to bring: Sides and/or desserts to be shared pot-luck style (remember we are providing chips) + lawn chairs (there is a lot of shade there) + any outdoor yard games (easily transported, of course) that you enjoy playing and can be set-up in such a location.

NOTE: *Obviously, we are planning this as an outside event (we have rented the sheltered pavilion there at the park). In the event of rain, we will communicate any necessary change in plans that afternoon - likely just moving the event to the church.*



It's not for the *entire* Southland family (sorry, guys), but the "Timeless Faith" ladies' tea on Saturday, June 27 at 2pm is for more than half of us ... and so, it's worth highlighting here as well. Plans are in place for a refreshing and enjoyable time together. Check out page 14 for more details about this event.

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 19 for more.

Our 2026 VBS is Monday, July 27 through Thursday, July 30 (evenings - from 6-8:30pm). This year's VBS from Answers in Genesis is "Emerald Crossing: An Irish Adventure through Psalm 23." See page 10 for more on this year's theme. 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. In fact, one of the cool things that happens during VBS is this: it becomes a great way for us to grow as we work together to bless and serve our younger ones ... kind of like what a FAMILY does!



A note about helping by DONATING items - since Sunday, May 17, there has been a VBS table/display in the foyer; it has instructions for how you can help via donations (whether providing actual items or making a financial donation). Thank you to all who have already showed a willingness to help in this way. These items will need to be returned by Sunday, June 21.

Some specific VBS actions steps:

- 1. *If you have kids who are participating (remember, VBS programming is for kids ages 4 through 8th grade), please see the link on page 10 and make sure to register!***
- 2. *Spread the word about VBS; encourage your own kids to invite their friends to join us or even invite kids you know (they, of course, can use the same registration link).***
- 3. *If you are willing and available, serve as a volunteer (use the online link on page 17). Also, be watching the calendar page in "The Vine" as there are various meetings upcoming for volunteers.***
- 4. *See above for helping with donations.***
- 5. *Be in PRAYER for the week and what God will use it to accomplish in the lives of our kids and the broader Southland family!***

As always, we are looking forward to this week. Not only is VBS a great opportunity for kids to learn, it's also a great way for us to grow as we serve together!



One last VBS item: check out page 10 and/or the display in the foyer for information about this year's VBS mission partners: the Tuttle's in Ireland ... seems appropriate given this year's theme!

Our 2026 "FLOURISH" gathering is set for August 30 at 5pm ... each year, it's an important evening together for our church family as we reflect on what has happened in the past ministry year and prepare for where God is leading us as we move ahead. As always, dinner is included, as well. For now, we ask that you mark down the date and plan to join us.

A Note about Southland Leadership

Each summer, we go through a process designed to help us identify potential new elders. As with any group, the leadership of a church family certainly matters, and the role of elder is a key part of God's design. Throughout this process, we will be using this space in "The Vine" to communicate information about how it works and to update you regarding our progress.



Scripture doesn't give us specific instructions as to *how* elders should be appointed. What we do know from the NT is that this is a significant responsibility in the life of a church family. Since we strive to follow God's Word as a guide for what we do and how we do it here at SCC, we strive to view this leadership role accordingly. As described in the elder portion of our "Leadership Covenant" (*see the "We Do!" section on page 7*), we believe that the NT identifies the elders of a church as those who collectively share in the ultimate responsibility and accountability for a congregation's spiritual health and well-being. It's a vital role in Jesus' church!

Because of that, we use a process here at Southland for selecting elders that we want to reflect the importance of this role. The purpose behind it is *not* to choose those men whom we think should lead according to *our* wisdom. Rather, our process is an attempt to recognize those men the Holy Spirit (a) has gifted for such leadership and (b) is calling to serve in this capacity *at this particular time*. In Acts 20:28, we see that whatever human process may be in place for a local congregation selecting elders, ultimately the Holy Spirit appoints such leaders.

As part of this process, we will have elder recommendation forms available at the Welcome Center (along with a box where completed forms can be left). *This recommendation phase runs for three Sundays: June 7, 14 and 21*. During this time, we provide Southland members with the opportunity to identify and recommend potential new elders. Men who feel called to serve and desire to do so can even submit their own names. We do encourage you to reflect on the qualities for elders from 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 as you consider potentially recommending someone.

Anyone recommended for this role who also desires to serve will then go through an interview process with the current eldership. Because of the importance of the role, we want potential elders to understand the expectations that go with this responsibility. We also want to help them clarify whether or not this is God's call for their lives at this point. From there, we will proceed through the process, with any new elders being ready to start serving in this capacity beginning in September as we launch our new ministry year.

Elders currently serving: *Ernie Emmerton, A.J. Gegg, Ben Jennings, Terry Ochs, Rick Randleman and Bob Wood. In September, Ben and Bob begin a "sabbatical" (a required year-off after six consecutive years) while Pat Little returns. As Lead Pastor, Matt is also considered a part of the elder team.*

We're working through the scholarship process in memory of Warren Burros, a long-time elder and member at Southland who passed away in 2020. We are grateful for the opportunity to further his legacy in our church family through this scholarship funded by his company. Applications have been submitted; we'll share more details about the 2026 recipients later this Summer!



A Brief Property Update: We have been approached with an offer on our south lot that has been listed with a realtor for several years now. There are still many details and logistics to work out (and it's too early to share much information out of respect for the process and the potential buyers). At this point, though, it *is* looking like we might reach an initial agreement in June, albeit with much to unfold before a deal would be closed. We'll keep you up-to-date as things unfold; for now, please be praying about this opportunity and its impact on our church family.

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

Since May is not yet complete at the time of publishing, we don't have any further update to share at this time; we'll share numbers for May and June together in the July edition of the Vine.

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 16. We are meeting as normal throughout the month of June, but *not on Sunday, July 5.*



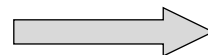
Sunday mornings at 10:30am ... our ENCOUNTER service - the time when we gather as a church FAMILY to meet with God; you can join us "in person" or online via the live stream if you cannot be here. See pages 15-16 for more.

Weekly ministries on a break over the Summer (starting in the month of May): Group Huddle for middle school/high school youth + Wednesday evening CULTIVATE + Thursday AM WSA/Ladies' Bible Study.

Specific Events to Highlight (listed by date):

Sunday, May 31 ... kick-off of our 2026 Summer sermon series "You've Got Questions" as Rick introduces the series with our first question. See page 15 for more on this series.

Sunday, May 31 ... "Open Hearts, Open Homes" lunch after service.



Wednesday, June 3 ... our first “Worship Night” of the Summer; see page 15 for more on this event.

Thursday, June 4 ... the first “Ladies’ Lunch” of 2026 - noon in the Fellowship Hall; see page 14 for more details.

Sunday, June 7 through Sunday, June 21 ... our “Elder Recommendation” process, an opportunity for Southland members to recommend names; see page 4 for more on this.

Sunday, June 7 ... due date for 2026 MOVE Conference balances (see p. 13).

Sunday, June 7 ... “Promotion Sunday 2026,” the day we promote kids up to their next grade level in our student ministries; see page 10 for specific impacts, especially as this all relates to Sunday mornings.

Sunday, June 7 ... our 2026 church FAMILY picnic; see pages 2-3 for more details, including what we’re asking people to bring.

Various dates in June (starting with Beginner Day Camp on Saturday, June 13) ... sessions at Maranatha Bible Camp; see page 11 for specifics dates as well as other camp-related details.



Sunday, June 15 ... “Happy FATHER’s Day!” We are grateful for Dads and their investment in us in all ways, especially their spiritual impact in our lives of faith. Of course, it’s also appropriate on this day to celebrate with gratitude our Heavenly Father!

Wednesday, June 17 ... another Summer “Worship Night” (again, see p. 15).

Thursday, June 18 ... the second “Ladies’ Lunch” at noon in the Fellowship Hall (see p. 14).

Sunday, June 21 ... the deadline for VBS donations to be returned (see page 3 for more on this way you can help); thanks for helping out in this way!

Saturday, June 27 ... “Timeless Faith,” the 2026 Ladies’ Afternoon Tea, starting at 2pm; see page 14 for information on this.

Sunday, June 28 ... “Open Hearts, Open Homes” lunch after service (*not meeting in July*).

Thursday, July 2 ... the third “Ladies’ Lunch” at noon in the Fellowship Hall (see p. 14).

Sunday, July 5 through Friday, July 10 ... the 2026 MOVE Conference for high school students; see page 13 for more details.

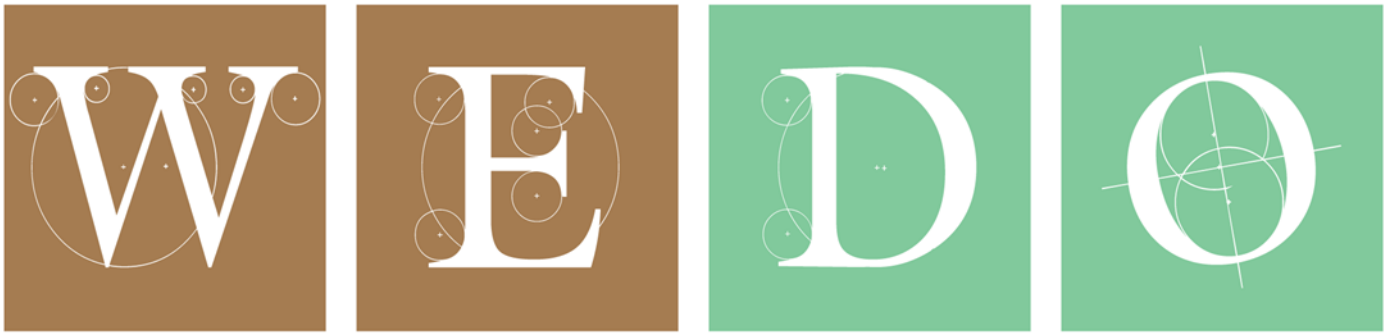
Sunday, July 12 ... VBS meeting for registration team and crew leaders.

Thursday, July 16 ... the fourth and final “Ladies’ Lunch” at noon in the Fellowship Hall (see p. 14).

July 18-25 ... a mission trip to Mexico with *Casas por Cristo* (see p. 19).

Monday, July 27 through Thursday, July 30 (starts at 6pm each day) ... “Emerald Crossing: An Irish Adventure through Psalm 23” - our 2026 VBS; see pages 3-4 and 10 for more about this key Summer event.

Sunday, August 30 ... FLOURISH 2026 at 5pm; as we move further into Summer, we’ll share more details about this important evening in the life of the Southland family.



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?

We are entering the time of year when we go through our annual process of considering new elders to potentially add (the process begins in June, see page 4). In light of that, we use this “WE DO!” section to highlight the specific commitments SCC elders make as part of this covenant. There is a broader set affirmed by both elders and staff (we will list those out in next month’s edition). What follows are the specific commitments we believe are important for elders to make based on what Scripture teaches.

ELDERS’ COMMITMENTS:

- ◆ *We covenant to embrace the unique and sacred responsibilities entrusted to us by God. In the NT design, local churches are led by elders – men of character, wisdom and life experience who have received this trust from Christ Himself (1 Peter 5:2; see also Acts 20:28). In light of that, these leaders are given the primary responsibility and accountability for a local church’s well-being.*
- ◆ *We covenant to protect against false teachings by guarding the Truth as it is communicated in God’s Word. This is one of the consistent tasks of elders in the NT (see Acts 20:28–31; 2 Timothy 1:13–14 and Titus 1:9). In fact, routinely when the imagery of shepherds is used for elders in the NT, the emphasis is on guarding the flock in this specific way – from the threat of false doctrine.*
- ◆ *We covenant to seek God’s will for Southland as we are led by the Holy Spirit and God’s Word. Elders serve recognizing that this church – like all local congregations – is part of GOD’s flock and CHRIST’s body (see Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:15 and 1 Peter 5:2–3). Together, as a team of shepherds, elders seek to discern and discover His leading through the Holy Spirit and God’s Word.*
- ◆ *We covenant to follow the example and leading of Jesus, the Chief Shepherd, as we care for and nurture the congregation as shepherds of His flock. Elders should serve essentially as what we could call “under-shepherds” to Jesus, the “Chief Shepherd” (1 Peter 5:2–4 & Heb. 13:20). He is both the example and the One who directs elders in their role as shepherds.*
- ◆ *We covenant to make decisions based on the long-term health and well-being of God’s people at Southland. Part of the shepherding imagery involves guiding and directing the flock. Elders should strive to make decisions that will guide God’s flock away from dangers and to what’s best.*
- ◆ *We covenant to lovingly exercise discipline of members when necessary for the glory of God, the good of the one caught in sin and the health of the church as a whole. Christian community involves lovingly leading people away from sin and to restoration. Because of that, when it’s necessary, SCC elders strive to carry-out this God-given role in as God-honoring a way as possible.*

What MATTERS to me ...

I am not nearly as handy with odd-jobs around the house or yard as I'd like to be. It's a fact of life that I've learned to deal with ... sometimes, as a result of humorous failures, even. To be fair to myself, sometimes, it's a lack of tools; I just don't always seem to have exactly what is needed for that specific task. Tools matter. In fact, it often can make the difference between being well-equipped to handle a task or not. It's why we humans have created hammers, screwdrivers, saws, wrenches, etc. - both the hand-held and power varieties. It's why we've developed technology "tools" in the form of software and apps to help us execute various tasks of that sort. Tools exist to simplify a job that we need to get done or even to make it possible for us to accomplish one we couldn't on our own. That's a key part of what makes a tool a tool.

In some ways, I hesitate to reduce God's Word to a "tool," but really, it fits with the language that Paul uses in describing Scripture in 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Here's what he writes, the full two verses in the NIV (the original form in which I first memorized this text):

¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

There are some great metaphors in Scripture about Scripture. It's a light or lamp that provides clarity on a path we walk in life (Psalm 119:105); that's a big part of what God's revelation does for us amidst our uncertainty. To use Jesus' analogy in one of His famous parables, it's a seed that - when properly received by the human heart - brings about a yield of fruitfulness (see Mark 4:1-20 and parallels). Here's why I think the metaphor of a TOOL fits as well given the language of 2 Timothy 3. Notice the words "useful" and "equipped." Let's look at each one:

- ◆ "USEFUL" is a word that speaks to something that provides an advantage or benefit. That sounds like a tool, right? It's anything that can be useful in accomplishing a task that would be challenging or impossible otherwise. In this instance, the point is that Scripture makes a difference in a life of faith! There are certainly other resources that God has provided for us: His Spirit, Christian community, etc. Yet, without His revelation through His Word, we couldn't possibly carry-out a life of faith on our own as effectively as we can because of Scripture.
- ◆ Notice also the end result - being "thoroughly EQUIPPED." Even in that word, we can make a connection to equipment. It's through Scripture that people of faith have what we need for following Jesus. It's the truth upon which we build our lives with a firm foundation. It's the guidance that leads us to God's will - what is right and what is wrong. It's what shows us the priorities of God's heart, the values by which we should live as His people, the convictions that should drive us, etc. Scripture cannot do the work for us, but through it, we are equipped for what faces us in a life of faith ... especially when we remember that the same Spirit who brought about God's Word is the same Spirit present within us!

What might we call something that is "useful" at helping us be "well-equipped" for a task? It's why the idea of a "tool" seems to capture Paul's words quite well.

We gain instruction about a life of faith because we have God's Word to teach us. We find the correction we desperately need because we have God's Word to lead us away from wrong paths and onto right ones. We find ourselves ready for right living because we have God's Word to train us in that way. What a gift God's Word is to us! Of course, let's not miss this fairly obvious connection: what makes it so valuable as a tool is the fact that it comes from Him - as Paul puts it, Scripture is "God-breathed," what we call the Holy Spirit's "inspiration." It's still the words of human authors, but those who were guided along in the process so that what they wrote was what the Spirit wanted them to reveal from God. Indeed, it's what makes it God's Word to begin with.

All of this matters as we come to a life of faith and our main Summer 2026 series: "You've Got Questions." May this be our starting point - a commitment. Instead of relying on the answers that come from ourselves or other voices around us, may we start with the "tool" God has provided us through His Word. If we want to be well-equipped for a life of faith, it's a very useful place to begin!

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 this Summer, due to numbers and age groupings beyond Promotion Sunday, we are combining our K through 5th grade students.



Check out the bottom of the next page for Sunday School-related impacts from Promotion Sunday (starting on Sunday, June 7).

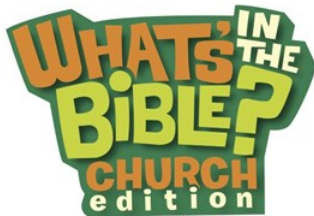
We're having our regular 9:15am ministry programming - including these classes - all throughout June; the next schedule change is July 5 ... no 9:15am groups/classes that day.

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

Here's what happens for kids 5th grade and younger during this time slot (again, see the next page for Promotion Sunday impacts):

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 in the Gathering Room 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 June.*



For the month of June, "Kid ENCOUNTER" starts a new curriculum called "What's in the Bible?" It's a year-long curriculum focusing on the big story of God's Word. Each week will include an activity for kids to take home and complete for the following Sunday. The first four lessons focus on where the Bible came from (i.e., who wrote it) plus the story of Genesis.

Wednesday evening programming resumes in late August/early September; be watching for details.



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

We're gearing up for our 2026 VBS. This year's (Irish) theme focuses on Psalm 23 and David's story - exploring God as Shepherd, Guide, Counselor, Provider and King. We are excited about this event and all that will happen in these jam-packed days! VBS is a great week for the kids and everyone involved within the Southland family!

*VBS is for kids age 4 through 5th grade with separate plans for middle school students (all based on next school year).**



Our VBS home page: <https://gosouthland.myanswers.com/emerald-crossing/>

To register: <https://gosouthland.myanswers.com/emerald-crossing/register/>

(You can click on both of these links if you're viewing this electronically.)

If you are interested in volunteering for VBS, we'd love your help; see page 17 for a link ... for information about donating items to help with VBS, see page 3.

Also, make sure you're paying attention to the general calendar section for information about various VBS meetings coming up (we list them there when they're scheduled).

* Accommodations are made for younger children of workers.

A note about our VBS missions partner:

In keeping with this year's broader theme, VBS offering this year is going to support **Nick and Jes Tuttle**. They live and serve as missionaries on the west coast of Ireland in a small village called Oughterard. This year's goal is \$1,500 for the week. The money raised will enable students there to attend a CIY event in Ireland - a big deal to young people there just as it is here. [Stop by the VBS display for a picture and a longer note of introduction from the Tuttles!](#)

Some Info Applicable to Kids and Youth

At the beginning of each June, we "promote" our young people to their next grade level throughout our ministries for kids and youth; fittingly, it's called "PROMOTION Sunday." (This year, the first Sunday of June isn't until the 7th.) Here are the specific impacts effective that day:

During Sunday School (9:15am), students entering the following grades move to a new class:

As mentioned on the previous page, due to our numbers and age groupings, our students K through 5th grade are meeting together in Room 3.

Incoming 6th graders to the Middle School class (Gathering Room - part B)

Incoming freshmen to the High School class (Gathering Room - part A)

Graduated seniors to the Launch college-age Connect Group (Room 5 - can also wait until August)

During "Kid ENCOUNTER" (10:30am) ... any incoming 1st graders also move up to the 1st-5th grade "Kid ENCOUNTER" or, at least, have the option to (younger kids are "promoted" throughout the year according to birthdays); as a reminder, our grade school students start in service with their families. In addition, new 6th graders remain with their families for the entire ENCOUNTER service.

Summer Camp 2026 @ Maranatha



We have been providing information for families as we prepare for the 2026 camp season at Maranatha Bible Camp. Below, we have included all the details about camp we need to communicate for the sessions (e.g. what to pack, departure/arrival times, etc.):

Medication: Medicines should be in the original prescription bottle with dosage info. Over-the-counter medications need to have your child's full name on the packaging.

What to Pack: Bible, bedroll, towels, personal grooming items/toiletries, modest swim wear, flashlight, insect repellent, sunscreen, rain gear, casual clothing and a bag for dirty clothes. This is just a sampling; the camp's website has even more specifics: <http://maranathabiblecamp.org/summer-camp/what-to-pack>.

Money: Students should also bring money for canteen (Jessica or Les will communicate more details to students and families re: an amount).

Camp t-shirts are also for sale at the canteen - \$15 again this year.

There will also be an offering to support the specific mission for each session.

One of the highlights of camp comes at mail time; here's where you can send mail:



(Name of camper and their session)
 c/o Maranatha Bible Camp
 18131 Highway WW
 Everton, MO 65646

Camp DEPARTURE (from Southland) and RETURN (to Southland) times:

Session (ages/grades)	Departure	Return
Beginner Camp 2 (K-1 st)	Saturday, 6/13 at 8am	Saturday, 6/13 at ~4:45pm
Kids' Camp 1 (2 nd -4 th)	Thursday, 6/18 at 9am	Saturday, 6/20 at ~2:45pm
5 th /6 th Grade Camp 1	Sunday, 6/14 at 2pm	Wednesday, 6/17 at ~2:45pm
Junior High Camp (7 th -8 th)	Sunday, 6/28 at 2pm	Thursday, 7/2 at ~3pm

LES' LATEST

Hello, my name is Les, and I'm a semi-professional camper. Not the "sleep-in-a-tent-under-the-stars" type camper, but the church camp type. When I simply combine the words "Summer" and "camp" in the same sentence, some people's minds jump to images of mosquitos, poison ivy and singing "Kumbaya" around an open fire. Let me just tell you, a week of camp can be so much more. My parents registered my brothers and me for Summer Bible camp when I was 9. I still have great memories of finding turtles, nights in a sleeping bag and studying the Word of God. These opportunities and experiences instilled



the importance of Bible camp. This is still the kind of experience our young people are going to have this Summer at Maranatha Bible Camp.

When young people come to camp, they unplug from their electronic devices. Our culture is loud - there's all sorts of noises going on all the time. Between school, sports, homework, smart phones and video games, kids are ready for a break. At Maranatha, campers exchange the digital world for the beauty of a sunset and the sound of crickets at night. Within the first night at camp, they breathe in nature and interact with those around them. They can't wait to jump off the towering zip line, practice archery or demonstrate a "cannonball" into the swimming pool.

Most importantly, students have the opportunity to saturate their minds and hearts with God's Word. Young people come back from camp excited because they've learned more about Jesus. At MBC, youth spend days studying and memorizing Scripture, listening to Bible teaching and singing praises. I love camp because I believe God speaks to us through His creation, His Word and His people. This is the kind of place where spiritual transformation happens. I'm excited to see how our young people will connect with their Savior this time around at Maranatha. Let's get packing!

GROUP HUDDLE NEWS

Here in the Summer months, Sunday evening GROUP HUDDLE it in the midst of its annual break. It will resume with a fun kick-off event around the time when a new school year begins.

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 - which has a divided wall to separate it into two rooms - off of the Great Room. Meeting as normal throughout the month of June (our next schedule change is on July 5 - no classes/groups on that day). Also, see page 10 for a reminder about Promotion Sunday on June 7.*

Wednesday Evening CULTIVATE: this resumes in late August/early September.

FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

There are two significant events coming this Summer for middle school students that are coming up in the Summer:



For next year's middle school students ... check out the reminders about the 2026 camp season at Maranatha Bible Camp (page 11). *This is a key part of our Summer ministry to middle school students.*

Also, in conjunction with our children's VBS, we offer recreational activities for middle school youth (those going into 6th-8th grades *next* school year) - **6-8:30pm each evening, Monday, July 27 through Thursday, July 30.** You're invited to come enjoy nightly adventures while making new friends. **If you're inviting a guest, be sure their parent/guardian fills out a Southland participation consent form as this needs to happen before they join us.**

See the next page for a lineup of fun-filled events for these nights ...



- Monday, July 27** **Field Games at Southland** ... enjoy hilarious "bigger-than-life" games in the church's open field (*bring tennis shoes and bug spray; water bottles and popsicles provided*).
- Tuesday, July 28** **Miniature Golf** ... here's your opportunity to walk around the course pretending your putter is a fancy cane (*admission is covered for this evening's event and water bottles will be provided*).
- Wednesday, July 29** **Roller Skating** ... lace up the skates and enjoy your time with friends under a giant disco ball (*again, admission is covered, but be sure to bring extra money for concessions*).
- Thursday, July 30** **Sonic & Sand Volleyball** ... this week wraps-up our time together with a night of fun (*bring money for a sweet treat*).

To help us plan, we ask that you use the same VBS registration link on page 10; and, again, don't forget the extra consent form for any new friends joining us!

FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ...



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 all set.

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.

Thanks to another successful yard sale, we were able to reduce student balances by almost \$80/person (students and sponsors). ***Thanks to all who served during the sale itself!*** Additionally, we have also contributed a small amount of ministry funds to help *Southland families* with this year's cost ... as is done with camp.



Families should have received an invoice with details about the remaining balance owed after such deductions; check with Les if you still need that information. *You can pay that via cash, check - made out to "Southland" - or using the Tithely app (see p. 5 for instructions).*

The final 2026 MOVE balance is due Sunday, June 7.

Three more MOVE-related notes:

1. MOVE release forms are mainly completed by the end-of-May - all done through CIY's online registration; Les is staying on top of that and will let families know if something is missing.
2. Students will be housed in a dorm, two people in each room. You can sign-up for your 2026 MOVE Conference roommate at the display in the foyer.
3. Be watching your mailbox for a conference guide as we move toward the event. This information will include a packing list, rules, schedules and other general details about this year's conference.

Southland Women



As is our custom within some other ministries, WSA breaks for the Summer months. We do still provide occasional opportunities for connecting over this Summer - at times, gathering for coffee (let Kristie know if you want to be informed about those) as well as the two items below.

Summer Ladies' Lunches are back for 2026!

4 Thursdays: June 4 + June 18 + July 2 + July 16

Noon each time - lunch provided or you're welcome to bring your own.

RSVP at the display in the foyer (up later in May) or through this link:

<https://gouthland.churchcenter.com/people/forms/1218706>

We hope you can join us for food and time to connect!

An Upcoming Women's Ministry Event

Ladies' Afternoon Tea - Saturday, June 27, 2026
at 2pm in the Great Room

(for all ladies - those in middle school and older)

This is a key Summer event. We eat delicious snacks, enjoy being together as sisters-in-Christ, spend some time in worship, listen to a guest speaker (Teresa Roberts from Ozark Christian College again this year) and more. We're looking forward to another great time together!

NOTE: *Childcare can be provided, if/ as needed.*



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



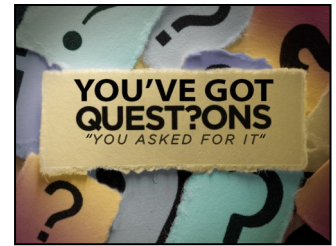
**Wednesdays, June 3 and 17 - 6:30pm
in the courtyard* both times**

We have these times as part of our worship ministry. These occasional opportunities are set aside for a music-centered worship experience. *The current plan is to host a few of these over the Summer months (on Wednesdays since CULTIVATE is not meeting) - future dates beyond will be shared later.* We hope you join us as we ENCOUNTER our Father in a different context, but still to express our praise and adoration!

* In the event that weather doesn't cooperate, we'll simply move indoors.

Our Upcoming Preaching/Encounter Calendar

As we've been mentioning during May, our Summer 2026 sermon series is called "You've Got Questions" (it actually launches on 5/31). We used this grid back in 2022 - and, for that matter, in 2017, too. In this series, what unites the various sermons is this common feature: we're looking at answers from God's Word to YOUR specific questions - ones you've submitted/asked! The in-and-out nature of Summer is a good time to do such a series where each week becomes its own "stand alone" topic.



We've already received several questions and are starting to build the series accordingly.* Based on the length of this series (through most of July), it's not possible to get to every single one that's asked - at least, in this series context. With each one we do select, our goal will be to consider how Scripture addresses that specific theme. Be watching "The Southland Scoop" Facebook page toward the end of each week (usually Friday afternoon) where we'll post the question we're answering for each week. Just remember, along the way in such a series, *"You - or someone, anyway - asked for it!"*

* Even as we get into June, it's not too late to submit a question. You can do that at the display in the auditorium, on the post found on "The Scoop" or via e-mail (to info@gosouthland.org). We'll continue shaping the series as questions come in.



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 as we head into the busier Summer months when people are in-and-out a bit more. 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.

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 continue on into 2026, our Connect Groups are meeting at 9:15am on Sundays* (note: we do have Sunday School classes for all ages of kids/youth as well during this time). 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 to others within the Southland family.

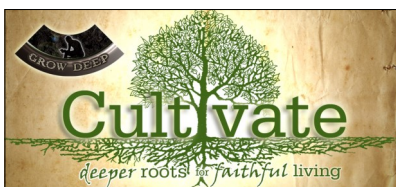
* We are meeting as normal at 9:15am on May 31, then throughout June; our next schedule adjustment comes on July 5 - groups/classes are not meeting as part of the 4th of July weekend.

An Additional NOTE: There might be some adjustments to our groups during the Summer months; we'll share those in groups along the way if/as applicable.

A Note re: Upcoming "First Sunday CONNECTION" Times

As mentioned on page 2, we are in a stretch of time where it's going to be awhile before our next "First Sunday CONNECTION" (due to our annual church family picnic on the evening of June 7 - we won't do the CONNECTION time in the morning because of this event - as well as not having 9:15am groups/classes on July 5). We'll communicate details along the way to keep you in the loop about these times.

GROW DEEP MINISTRIES



Our Wednesday evening CULTIVATE is off through the Summer. We'll share more details about plans for what's ahead as we move toward a new ministry year.



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 is one specific upcoming opportunity to serve others: our 2026 VBS!

As usual, we are needing lots of volunteers for **VBS**; the dates for this year are July 27-30 (evenings, from 6-8:30pm - see page 10 for more information about registering, the theme and the week itself). Here are two specific ways you can participate:



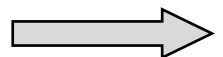
1. **We need volunteers** (if you are willing to serve, please use the following link to let us know): <https://gosouthland.myanswers.com/emerald-crossing/volunteer/> ... you can also contact Jessica and she'll help you find the right spot.
2. **We'll also need donations** if that's more of how you can help; see page 3 for more on helping in this way. *These need to be returned on Sunday, June 21.*

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 VBS, 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 contact a staff member or use one of the blue "BUILD UP" cards to let us know where you want to get plugged-in to serving.**

A big "THANKS!" to Rick Randleman for leading the charge on our annual "LIVE OUT: Service Day" back on May 3 - to those who helped on a project at Southland or one away from the building and to those who helped with lunch afterwards (especially Dylan Young on the grill and Kristie Martin organizing things) ... thank you!

(See the next page for additional "thank you's" from recent service at Southland.)



A “thank you” to **Tim Swadley** who did a backflow test for us again this year (a required annual test with). By this act of service, he saved us a few hundred dollars.



A “thank you” to those who helped with the yard sale in early May, including those who donated items. From there, it all starts with **Les Londeen** who spends hours starting each Spring getting donations collected and organized. In addition to students, families and sponsors, we especially want to acknowledge others who served: **Ron & Marta Ramey** (Kristin Londeen’s parents), **Kaylee Schuhart**, **Kira Smith**, **Tim & Cary Swadley** plus **Jay & Kim Tyler**. “Thank you,” all, for making this happen for our youth!

A “thank you” to **Cheryl Boland**, **Sean Falconer** and **Niki Short** who have already been at work helping **Jessica Young** with **VBS décor**. As we move toward this annual event in late July, there are many who will serve, but we wanted to make sure we acknowledge these individuals who have already been at work in this way!

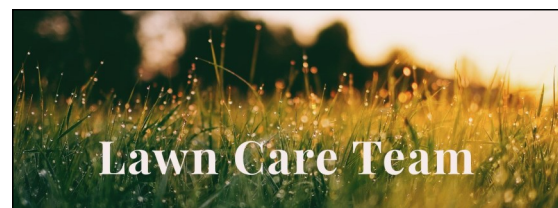
SERVING SCHEDULE for June 2026

	Foyer Hosts (10:15 on, through whole service)	Greeters (at the doors from 10:15-10:40)	Serving Team Leader
6/7	Bob & Liz Wood	Room #6 Connect Group	Mark Miller
6/14	Ernie & Charlotte Emmerton	Room #7 Connect Group	Doug Graves
6/21	Doug & Susan Graves	“Voyage” Connect Group	Deckard Family
6/28	Ben & Debbie Jennings	“Launch” Connect Group	Les Londeen

	Nursery workers (all morning)	Wee Kid ENCOUNTER & Li'l Kid ENCOUNTER	Kid ENCOUNTER (1 st - 5 th grades)
6/7	Lillards	<i>Anna Randleman</i> <i>Harmony Martin</i>	Jessica Young/Cary Swadley
6/14	Youngs (9:15am)/ Deckards (10:30am)	<i>Ezri Smith</i> <i>Debbie Hoenshell</i>	Sean & Megan Falconer
6/21	Martins	<i>Jessica Young</i> <i>Grace Worthy</i>	Thomas & Stef Hall
6/28	Harnstroms	<i>Aiden Simpson</i> <i>Sonya Simpson</i>	Sandy Arneson/Becky Kurth

LAWN CARE Schedule (it needs to be completed by the Saturday date listed):

- 6/6 - Little/Easter
- 6/13 - Brothers/Jennings
- 6/20 - Deckards
- 6/27 - Constantine/Wood
- 7/4 - Denovi/Arenson



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)

LIVE OUT MINISTRIES



... a path for putting
faith into action.



www.occ.edu



Our annual “LIVE OUT: Service Day” was May 3.

This day is obviously in the rearview mirror at this point. However, before we completely put it behind us, we wanted to make sure and look back just a bit on the day. Once again, it was a great day of service as the Southland FAMILY - young and old - participated in various projects. In addition to some projects around the church property, we worked on the grounds of Horace Mann Elementary School and CCH, provided meals for local fire houses, served at Quail Creek (the skilled nursing portion) and went to a local gas station to pay for customer's fuel as an act of kindness. *All in all, it once again proved to be a great day on the calendar for our Southland family; a big “thank you” to all who participated and helped make the day happen!*

Make sure you check out “The Southland Scoop” - our internal Facebook page - for pictures from the day (you'll have to go back a bit to find them).

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 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 was due by April 30, then the remaining balance of \$225 is due by June 1.*