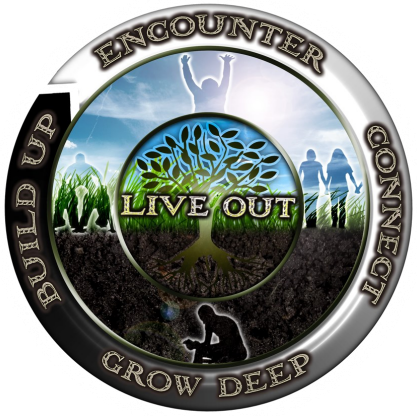
SOUTHLAND CHRISTIAN CHURCH
1630 W. Republic Road * Springfield, MO 65807
www.gosouthland.org

The Southland Vine

For NOVEMBER 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.





We are in the midst of this annual "LIVE OUT" effort at Southland.

We invite you to join us as we work together to bless families in need, especially during this Thanksgiving season.

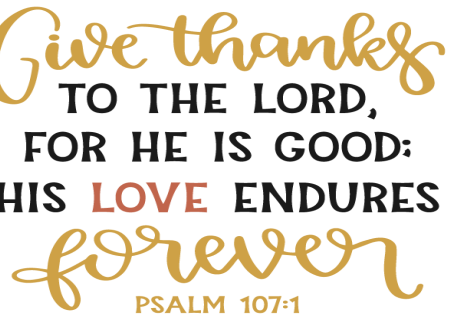
See the "LIVE OUT" section (page 19) for more details about how you can help through your donations. NOTE: we do need items returned by Sunday, November 15.

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We plan to publish the next edition of *The Vine* in early December.





Southland "FAMILY" News



Congratulations to Mila Butler who was immersed into Christ by her Dad, Jay, on Sunday morning, October 18.

We rejoice with her in this decision to follow Jesus!

A Look Back to October:



Overall, there was a lot that happened during October. In the Southland family, that included our annual "Fall Family Fun" event on October 18 - another great opportunity to enjoy time as a church family. It was a perfect autumn evening weather-wise for the event. We ate delicious soups and chilis - a fantastic meal, yet again! Kids seemed to have a lot of fun. The band in the courtyard was a hit, adding a nice touch to the evening, especially after supper when the fires were going and the temperature was dropping. And, the Chiefs won, too! Throughout it all, good connections were made and conversations were had. It's a big part of what such a night is designed to do: to enhance our sense of together-ness as a church FAMILY. Without a doubt, this night - as it always does - accomplished that goal! It's why we value such gatherings.

Some UPCOMING EVENTS in the Life of the Southland Family:

Throughout this edition of "The Vine," we continue to share about some key upcoming events in the life of Southland. While there is much more information in the pages that follow, we want to make sure we especially highlight the broader FAMILY-wide impacts here in one spot.

Our next "First Sunday CONNECTION" - November 1 @ 10am



When the calendar permits as it did at the start of October and does again in November, we host these times - on "first Sundays" of the month. It's an opportunity for the Southland FAMILY simply to make connections with others - to bolster existing relationships and/or perhaps to establish new ones. We offer simple breakfast items and coffee, but otherwise, there's nothing else we do besides providing the basic context. 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. *Kids up through 5th grade will have their own time in Rooms 1 and 2 (nursery-age kids will remain there during this time).*



THANKSGIVING Baskets

From the middle of October onward, we are in the midst of our annual "THANKSGIVING Baskets" project. This effort is a great (and easy!) way for the Southland FAMILY to come together to serve and bless others in our local communities during this season. We have been communicating details about how you can participate. As always, this includes the opportunity to donate items so that we can build the baskets. *Check out the "LIVE OUT" section (p. 19) for more specifics about this effort.* As a reminder, the deadline to return donated items is Sunday, November 15.

Sunday AM, November 15 - "Cinnamon Roll Fundraiser"



In a repeat of what happened last year, the youth will be selling these on Sunday, November 15 as a fundraiser for next year's trip to the "MOVE" Conference. We have a donor who is again generously purchasing some cinnamon rolls in conjunction with the Clever Christian Church's Fall Bazaar. (In this way, it's a blessing on multiple levels!) Then, these will be available for purchase throughout that Sunday morning - as long as they are available. Feel free to buy some before your 9:15am CONNECT Group/Sunday School class (or, even more than one to bless others), in-between that time and our 10:30am ENCOUNTER or, if they're still available, after church to take home with you.

We are grateful for this opportunity to help support our students' trip to "MOVE!"

December: "A Church FAMILY Christmas"



This is how we package the Christmas season at Southland each December. Just as families have traditions this time of year, so do we as a church FAMILY. It may seem like a long way off, but it will be here soon; we'll share even more as we get closer. For now, see below for some of the bigger ways we'll celebrate. ***We're looking forward to another Christmas season together!***



<u>Sunday, December 6 at 5pm - a "Thanks-Mas Family Dinner"</u> ... no, we're not "taking Christ out of Christmas," we use this opportunity to do what families do during the holiday season: they gather for a meal. We value such relaxed times when we can come together with a slower pace and enjoy the company of one another. After all, isn't that the point of such meals in a holiday season? Instead of doing separate meals for Thanksgiving and Christmas, we have a tradition of meeting (somewhat) in the middle for one dinner; hence the name! ***We will share more details later on, including what we'll be asking you to contribute for the meal; for now, make plans to join us.***

<u>Sunday AM, December 13</u> ... this will again be a special morning. We start with breakfast for everyone at 9:30am (no normal 9:15am ministry programming) as a time of fellowship. That will be followed by our Children of Praise performance of "Christmas in Reverse" during our normal ENCOUNTER time at 10:30am; it replaces the typical sermon for this one week. Check out page 9 for more on this year's production. It's a great way to put us in the Christmas spirit each year as we allow our young people to remind us of what it's truly all about.

<u>Wednesday, December 24 at 6pm</u> ... as is our custom, we'll gather as a church family with guests for our candlelight service on Christmas Eve - a Thursday, this year.

Beyond these church-wide events, there is more happening in December within individual ministries as well, including various Christmas parties. See page 6 for dates; we'll also be sharing more in the next edition of "The Vine."

The Latest Property Update (Our South Lot):

As we've been sharing, we have signed a preliminary agreement to sell ~1.5 acres of our south lot, the portion we've had on the market for years now - a huge praise! **At this point, *there is one hurdle that has been crossed* as the re-zoning has officially been approved - one of the necessary preliminary steps before the sale could be finalized. There also appears to be a possibility (no guarantee, of course), that should the remaining hurdles be cleared - primarily, approval of a grant to the proposed developers, the sale could be finalized more toward early Spring. We'll keep you up-to-date as things continue to unfold; for now, please continue praying.**

A Quick Note on Missouri Amendment 3:

On our Facebook page, "The Southland Scoop," we have passed along some materials from our ministry partners at the Pregnancy Care Center (only because this issue specifically deals with a matter of faith - God's rightful role as Creator of life). *We encourage you to be informed and use your voice to speak up for life with a "YES" vote.* This would restore a level of restrictions when it comes to abortion compared to the current status. Continue also to be in prayer.

Some Technology Tools for the Southland Family

CHURCH CENTER by Planning Center ... One benefit of this specific tool is the online directory that those who have signed-up can access through a secure log-in and password (https://people.planningcenteronline.com/). This is also available for you to download as an app called "Church Center App." 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 from within the "PEOPLE" portion of this here at Southland. Through that, we are able to send messages to the full lists we've created using the contact information available. All of our family-wide e-mail communications now are coming from here, including any prayer requests we send out. *Please let us know if you are not receiving these.*

FACEBOOK, including "The Southland Scoop" ... We have a general Facebook page that is public/visible for sharing information about us more broadly (*e.g.* this is what we use for putting out our weekly live stream as well - see page 12 for more on that). *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, reminders, announcements, updates, etc. We encourage you to find it and get connected with us in this way.

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 (you can also use the QR-Code). It's 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 a payment, we do ask that you cover any fees. *We are grateful to have this tool available for those who choose to use it.*

FINANCIAL UPDATE … For October 2026

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

INCOME: October monthly tithe = $29,114^{00} (4 Sundays) Average weekly tithe = $7,278^{50}

We are now two months into this ministry year. Our current weekly average projects to the $391,800 range for the year; while that's well below our need (see below for more on that), it is not an unexpected start given past years and the overall giving pattern we've experienced.

As a reminder, we did finish the last ministry year *near* where we needed to be with our giving, short of our goal, but not too far away from it (again, *thank you for your ongoing faithful giving to Southland!)*. That means we started this year in a decent spot. As a result, we do still have some levels of reserves; that's true even after two relatively "down" giving months. **Our budgeted tithe need for this year is also a bit lower - in the $473,000 range (it was closer to $480,000 last year).** While we're in decent shape (and we have the property sale still pending), 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."** Amidst it all, leadership works to manage where we are with wise stewardship - balancing our responsibility to be realistic while still prioritizing effective ministry and necessary expenses that arise along the way … of course, with appropriate faith in His provision factored-in as well!

Weekly ministry happenings - Southland FAMILY-wide:

Sunday mornings at 9:15am … ministry programming for all ages including CONNECT Groups for adults - Sunday School classes for all kids/youth as well - see page 16 for more details. *As a reminder: we are meeting as normal for November - including a "First Sunday CONNECTION" at 10am on 11/1 - and on December 6.*





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.

Sunday evenings from 6-8pm … Group Huddle for middle school and high school youth (see pp. 10-11). *This is meeting each Sunday during November, except for Thanksgiving weekend at the end of the month (11/29).*

Wednesday evening CULTIVATE, a "GROW DEEP" ministry … 5:30 for dinner, 6:30 for ministry programming each week, including D-Groups. See page 17 for more. *This semester ends on Wednesday, November 18.*



Thursday mornings (10am start time) … WSA - Ladies' Bible Study (see p. 14) - *again serving as a D-Group (the same content), just on Thursdays instead of during CULTIVATE.* This semester ends Thursday, November 19.

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; see the next page for a list of dates.

Mid-to-late-OCTOBER into NOVEMBER … during this stretch of time, we invite you to join us in our annual "Thanksgiving baskets" effort (see pp. 2 and 19).

Sunday, November 1 … "Daylight Savings Time" ends for 2026. Make sure to set your clocks *back an hour* Saturday into Sunday ("Fall back!").

Sunday, November 1 … another "First Sunday CONNECTION" at 10am (again, 9:15am groups/classes still meet, just with an earlier end time); see page 2.

Sunday, November 1 … on this morning, we will again be participating in the annual "International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church" (see p. 19).

Saturday, November 7 … a fun kids' event - a trip to Chuck-E-Cheese; see page 9 for details.

Sunday, November 8 … the first pre-registration deposit ($90) for those students attending the 2027 MOVE Conference next July; see page 11 for specifics.

Wednesday, November 11 … Veterans Day - we are grateful for the many within the SCC family who have served our country in this capacity as well as their families!

Thursday, November 12 through Saturday, November 14 … ICOM in St. Louis; see page 19 for more details about this missions conference, including how to register. *Remember, because of our church-wide registration, you can attend at a reduced rate.*

Sunday, November 15 … the deadline for letting Jessica know who wants to attend the 2027 Super-Start event in January - includes both kids and parents (see p. 9).

Sunday, November 15 … *the last Sunday to bring donations for our Thanksgiving Baskets.*

Sunday, November 15 … youth "Cinnamon Roll Fundraiser" - sold on this morning to help with expenses for the 2027 MOVE Conference - see page 3 for more details.

Wednesday, November 18 & Thursday, November 19 … last CULTIVATE/WSA for the semester.

Thursday, November 26 … "Happy Thanksgiving!"

Sunday, November 29 … *no Group Huddle on this day.*

Wednesdays, December 2 and December 9 from 6-8pm … Children of Praise practice is still happening even though CULTIVATE is not meeting more broadly.

Saturday, December 5 … Children of Praise rehearsal - speaking parts only (9-10:30am).

Sunday, December 6 … our annual "Thanks-Mas Church FAMILY Dinner" at 5pm (see p. 3).

Thursday, December 10 @ 6pm … Southland Women's annual Christmas Party; see p. 14 for more information

Saturday, December 12 … Children of Praise dress rehearsal in the morning from 9-11am.

Sunday, December 13` … a special morning that includes a FAMILY breakfast and our 2026 Children of Praise production of "Christmas in Reverse" during our 10:30am ENCOUNTER time (see p. 3 for broader plans for this morning and page 9 for information for families with kids in C.O.P.).

Sunday, December 13 from 5-9pm … the Group Huddle Christmas party (see p. 10).

Thursday, December 24 … our annual Christmas Eve service at 6pm.

What MATTers to me ...

In completing degrees at both Ozark Christian College (a bachelor's degree in New Testament) and Lincoln Christian Seminary (a graduate level degree), I learned a lot. In so many ways, those long years filled my heart and mind with a huge amount of information that has been useful in ministry. Even more, though, certain professors during that time also taught me how to think Biblically and how to consider the ways God's Word helps us navigate questions of theology and life. In other words, I came out of that time equipped with tools that could help me in ministry far beyond just the learning gained. In my mind, one of the greatest and most valuable tools was the ability to embrace and deal with tension. I don't mean that necessarily in the form of interpersonal conflict - rather, what to do when wrestling with two ideas in Scripture that might *seem* contradictory.

Here are a couple of examples. How does the fact of God's sovereignty mesh with the reality of human free will? Each one seems to be a clear theme in Scripture; and so, instead of choosing one or the other, the better approach is to find the "both-and" that embraces them both. Or, how does the foundational fact of the Good News that we are "saved by grace through faith" fit with an equally clear emphasis on good works? Again, instead of "either-or," the better approach develops an understanding that leaves room for both. We could certainly point to other such examples as well. The goal of reading and applying God's Word should always be to allow His truth to stand as it is - not with contradictions, but with tension - instead of an answer that over-simplifies.

I think of that in connection with our Wednesday evening D-Group journey as we've been talking about OT stories of faith. One of the themes that regularly appears also is part of the message found in Hebrews 11: *God rewards faith!* In fact, consistently, whether in Biblical narratives or more direct teaching, trusting confidently in Him receives His applause, commendation, and often, His action in response. There are several times that theme has surfaced this semester. In light of that, it can be easy to come to an understanding of faith that assumes that, like turning a faucet handle, it automatically produces His response.

And yet, that's not the full picture. The promised son eventually arrived to Abraham and Sarah, but it wasn't exactly a quick resolution. God's blessings came to Joseph, but it took a long time of patiently waiting. That's not to mention the reminder of Hebrews 11 that for many of the OT greats of faith, they "died still believing what God had promised them" - in other words, their faith never became sight on earth. Think about Paul with the thorn in his flesh (2 Corinthians 12:7-10) or amidst all he experienced *because of* his faith. For that matter, think about Jesus in Gethsemane and His own pleading that the Father would take the suffering away from Him. Think about even the people you've know directly - many who have earnestly trusted God for an answer that never came. The issue is neither God's capacity nor a sufficient level of human faith; there seems to be far more at work.

That's where we find the tension: God clearly rewards faith; and yet, to restrict that reward to a certain earthly, circumstantial outcome dismisses what He's ultimately promised - especially to us in Christ. In the OT covenant, He promised very concrete blessings for this life - prosperity, abundant crops, victory over enemies, etc. (the kinds of things we see on display in the OT stories we've considered). Of course, it's not that we somehow have stopped receiving His blessings on that level. Yet, for us in Christ, the greatness of the reward that He promises for faith in the NT simply cannot be reduced to such things. In fact, that regularly becomes Paul's testimony. "To die is gain" (Philippians 1:21). Or, as he faced a seemingly imminent death, "And now, the prize awaits me - the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of His return" (2 Timothy 4:6-8). To remove the "reward" of eternity from the faith equation is to ignore the fullness of what Jesus' ultimately has guaranteed to those who are His. (And yes, beyond just eternity, even here-and-now we experience great blessings because of our faith - see Ephesians 1:3-14!). Faith confidently believes in God's capacity to intervene knowing He is fully and always able. That's how we too, like Paul, should respond to Him when we find ourselves in the challenges of life. Yet, faith also recognizes that God's response of a reward sometimes - even often? - doesn't come until we've reached the end of our earthly journeys. In the end, I think that's how we resolve the tension: God certainly rewards faith, but faith doesn't automatically demand or require a specific earthly response as it waits for the fullness of what He's promised in eternity!

Matt

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 meeting as normal in November and on 12/6, including a "First Sunday CONNECTION" time at 10am on 11/1 - kids have their own time.**

A REMINDER: We provide an additional opportunity during this time slot for kids who cannot be a part of Wednesday C.O.P. practices, but want to participate in the Christmas program. All of the 4 year-olds through 5th graders come together around 10am to spend some time learning songs for the C.O.P. program.

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 age 4 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 November.*

Back in the Summer, "Kid ENCOUNTER" started a new set of lessons called **"What's in the Bible?"** It's a year-long curriculum focusing on the big, overarching story of God's Word. *For November, the focus is on 1 & 2 Kings.*

Wednesday evening CULTIVATE - C.O.P.

During the Fall Cultivate session (6:30-7:45pm each Wednesday), our kids ages 4 through 6th grade participate in **"Children of Praise."** They're spending the time rehearsing songs, practicing drama and more, all in preparation for their annual Christmas performance; ***this year, it's on December 13.***

This year's program is called **"Christmas in Reverse."** Instead of leading -up to the nativity scene, this musical actually *starts* at the manger with Jesus' birth, and then, travels backwards to tell the story of why He came to earth. It even goes back to the beginning of the Bible's story at Eden in Genesis!

On Wednesdays, December 2 and 9, we will have additional practices (even though other parts of CULTIVATE are not meeting). Dress rehearsal is Saturday, December 12 from 9-11am before the program on 10:30am ENCOUNTER time on 12/13.

An Upcoming Kids' Event: a fun trip to Chuck E. Cheese

Saturday, November 7 - meet at Southland at noon (or there at 12:30pm)
(We're planning to be there until 3pm.)

For kids ages 2 through 5th grade

Cost is $15 - includes pizza (2 slices), a drink and 2 hours of playtime and prizes.

Sign-up at the check-in counter. *As always, parents are certainly welcome to come along.*

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

"Super Start" is a high-energy C.I.Y. event designed especially for pre-teens (kids in 4th, 5th and 6th grades). It's become a great annual tradition for our kiddos! This year, we are attending this event at a different location - **in Bentonville, AR on January 22-23, 2027** (it's typically been in Tulsa). Because of the timing, ***Jessica needs to know by November 15 who wants to go - both kids and parents interested in going as sponsors.*** The cost is $85.

We'll share more details - including what to bring - in the next edition of "The Vine."

LES' LATEST

As humans, we have a perspective problem. We tend to look at the world around us through the lens of "self". In other words, we process the daily events of our lives based on how they impact us. We also tend to only think in terms of recent history. Because our world is so fast-paced, we don't stop to think about the big-picture story of our lives. This is especially true when it comes to our past. We're pretty much laser-focused on the here and now and how it impacts us today. The only problem with this perspective is the fact that we miss out on the many ways God has intervened in our life.

Think of someone in your life that you love. Someone who makes you smile just thinking about them. I bet a part of your affection toward them is based on shared experiences: fun stuff you've done with them, tough times you've walked through alongside them, or any unique experiences you've shared together. It's no different with God. I am certain that you could point to specific times in your life when God showed up in a way that only He could. Do you make a point to remember these moments and thank God for them? You should. We all should.

The Psalms are full of examples of people recalling a time when God involved Himself in their lives. It was a key part of why His people worship. Check out Psalm 100:

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth!
Serve the LORD with gladness!
Come into His presence with singing!
Know that the LORD, He is God!
It is He who made us, and we are His;
we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.
Enter His gates with thanksgiving,
and His courts with praise!
Give thanks to Him; bless His Name!
For the LORD is good;
His steadfast love endures forever,
and His faithfulness to all generations.

Stop for a moment and think about a time when God moved in your life. Think of a time when you knew, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that He had intervened. Maybe it was an answered prayer. Maybe it was looking at a beautiful sunset and recognizing it as the work of God. Maybe God comforted you in a time of despair. Whatever the case, really focus on this intervention. Think about how you felt God's presence in your life. Voice your praise and thankfulness to God, telling Him how awesome He is and how thankful you are for His presence.

GROUP HUDDLE NEWS

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

GROUP HUDDLE Focus for this semester: Join us Sunday nights at Group Huddle Bible Study as we search the truths of this series entitled **"FOR ALL."**

Upcoming GROUP HUDDLE THEMES:

Sunday, 11/1 **"Costumes and Candies" ...** Everybody in clever disguises, anticipating candy prizes.

Sunday, 11/8 **"'Surfs Up!' Hawaiian Night" ...** Enjoy a night of ocean breezes, loud/ colorful Hawaiian shirts and crazy grass skirts.

Sunday, 11/15 **"Roastin' and Toastin'" ...** You're 's-more' than invited to a night of gooey goodness, great company and campfire fun!

Sunday, 10/25 **"Scooby's Holiday Snacks" ...** 'Zoinks!' Unmask the mystery; devour the snacks.

Sunday, 11/1 ***No Group Huddle (Thanksgiving weekend)***

A Look-Ahead - the 2026 Group Huddle Christmas Party - SAND VOLLEYBALL:

Sunday, December 13 from 5-9pm

'Tis the season to put your toes in the sand with some friendly competition. **Cost is $10/person** plus bring money for a fast-food supper (*i.e.*, McDonald's, Culver's or Taco Bell).

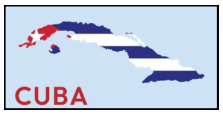
GROUP HUDDLE MEALS:



Each semester, we ask parents to help defray the expense of feeding several hungry teens at Group Huddle. **We ask parents to send $25 for each student** (that covers this semester, through December). ***If you haven't done so yet, please do so ASAP.*** You can make checks payable to Southland. *You can also do this through Tithe.ly by choosing the "Group Huddle meals" option … please also cover the fee for this if you are using this option (see page 4).*

Parent volunteers are also welcome/needed for meals; there is a sheet in the foyer with slots still open. Thank you to those who have already helped or signed-up to do so!

GROUP HUDDLE and CHILDREN'S MISSIONS:



Our mission partner for this semester is **Cuba Mission**. This is an organization dedicated to training and supporting nearly 28 ministers who lead New Testament Christian Churches in Cuba. **Cuba Mission** hosts youth outreaches, city-wide VBS programs, and distributes Spanish-language Bibles. *Each Sunday, our students have the opportunity to pray for our mission partners and give financially during both "Kid ENCOUNTER" and Group Huddle.*

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 meet the Gathering Room - it has a divider with two separate rooms - off of the Great Room.* ***We are meeting as normal for November and 12/6, students do join-in on the church-wide "First Sunday CONNECTION" time at 10am on 11/1.***

Wednesday Evening CULTIVATE - for 7th graders through high schoolers (meets from 6:30-7:45pm) - Wednesday, 11/19 is the last day for this semester.

FOR SENIOR HIGH STUDENTS

Registration for the 2026 MOVE Conference (graduating classes of '27-'31) actually happens *this* Fall to ensure spots. The dates for the conference - in Lincoln, Nebraska - are July 11-16, 2027. ***At this point, students should have already signed-up to reserve a spot.*** *Let Les know ASAP if your answer has changed.*

NOTE: To make sure we have spots saved for us, we have already made the first deposit to C.I.Y. The first pre-registration ($90) for next year's conference is due Sunday, November 8.



A "MOVE" Fundraiser Opportunity: As in 2025, the youth group is holding a **Cinnamon Roll Fundraiser** on Sunday, November 15 to help with the ever-increasing cost of the conference. We have a donor who is purchasing these items in conjunction with the Clever Christian Church's Fall Bazaar. The youth are then going to be selling them on 11/15 as long as they are available (see page 3 for specific details). ***We are grateful for this generous donation and the opportunity to help support our students' trip to "MOVE!"***

Southland Women



Many of you know that my dad passed away on October 1, 2026. Most of you didn't know him, so I'd like to take this space to tell you about him. I wish you could have known him. To know him was to love him.

Charlie Scott was one of the best men I've ever known. He loved Jesus, my mom, Karen, his family, and cars. He loved people. He spent most of his adult life in ministry, and he truly "found his calling" when he got to take the role of Pastoral Care Minister about 35 years ago. He didn't love writing sermons, though I loved hearing him preach. In his years of preaching, he latched on to the thought that a good sermon had "3 points and a poem," and he often closed his sermon with a fitting poem. At his funeral, my sister read one of his favorite poems, and it was a fitting close to his life.

When I think back over the years I lived at home, I remember how my dad was usually busy. He wasn't one to sit much. He worked with people a lot and was at the church a lot, but even when he was at home, he often had a project or two going. He never had the money to buy very nice cars, and so he seemed to be maintaining our cars a lot of evenings. He also worked several side jobs over the years, because he never made a lot of money and, in our family, there were several mouths to feed. At one stage, he worked at a Braum's, and we thought that was pretty great because sometimes he would bring home ice cream! In my teenage years, he worked at Domino's Pizza as a delivery driver, and occasionally he would bring home pizza. But, in spite of his being busy, I never remember him telling me he couldn't help me if I needed something. And that was true for others who might need him, too. He made the time. He helped people move more times than anyone else I know. His strong back and willingness to serve in whatever way was needed made people love him and count on him.

I remember so many times over those years, as we were driving somewhere, we would see a car parked at the side of the road. We didn't have to wonder – he WAS going to stop and try to help. Times were different then, and now most of us wouldn't feel safe to stop and check on someone, but back then, it was a given that we would be stopping. He was often successful in helping with a mechanical issue, or would help change a tire or take someone to a gas station for gas or whatever was needed. Often, I would watch him shake the driver's hand once they were ready to take off again, and they would thank him and sometimes offer to pay him for his help. Even if I couldn't hear him, I knew what he would say. I'd heard it enough times I could lip read while he said "Oh no, I just help in the name of Jesus. God bless you."

My dad was a great talker. Every once in awhile that would get him into trouble, but most of the time it was a great blessing. He put people at ease, and made people feel comfortable to share their lives with him. He could talk several minutes on a "wrong number" phone call, and he would often have a conversation out and about, and you'd know he had made a new friend. In recent history, I heard him talk about texting conversations he

had with people, him reaching out with technology to check on people and striving to encourage them. I was proud of him for embracing new tools to be used for God's Kingdom work. It became another way for his words to build connection with people and bring them closer to Jesus.



My dad cared about people, and their stories, literally and figuratively. He drove a church van and, in recent years, a church bus, picking up people for church and taking them home. He visited more people in the hospital or in their homes than anyone could count. Our last real phone conversation, he told me about going to visit a couple of ladies from the church who were now in a memory care facility. He was at a stage of health that it was a true challenge for him to get around. His legs didn't cooperate well. His back hurt; he had been diagnosed with a spinal fracture, and his pain and fatigue made it hard to get out and do things. He got winded from just a walk across a room, because his lungs had been compromised for a few years now. He was still on a church staff part-time, but ministry for him came at a great cost by the end. He would push hard and then have to rest possibly for the remainder of the day because of what it took out of him.

As we talked that day, he told me of visiting those ladies. He mentioned that while walking in the facility he had to stop at regular intervals and catch his breath. He talked with both ladies and with others he knew that he saw there, but he felt he might have agitated them both in different ways because their minds were not processing well. He seemed to almost feel bad for visiting them, while also saying he was glad to do it and that he had been meaning to for quite some time. I took that opportunity to tell him how very proud I was of him – that he was so dedicated to his work and loving on God's people that he was still doing those things when his health made it a struggle. Love to him meant sacrifice.

That is truly how he lived. He gave of himself even when it hurt. When I was young, it was giving time to push me on a swing, or let me tag along while he ran errands. When I was older, it was him working on my junky car. All through my childhood it was him working extra jobs so that my family had what we needed. I remember him writing to me a few times when I was in college, and I loved reading his quirky handwriting. I also loved that he would put in the envelope whatever cash he had on the day he mailed the letter. It might contain a $10 bill, or it might have $3.60, but to a poor college student, that was an unexpected blessing that might fund a trip to Walmart or McDonalds.

My dad taught me about Jesus. He spoke of Him like you would a friend. He baptized me almost exactly 42 years ago. After I had said I wanted to be baptized, I remember sitting with him in his recliner, looking up passages of Scripture about baptism and it's meaning and significance. My knowledge of Jesus has grown over the decades, but I never doubted that I understood what I was doing. He made sure I had a good grasp of the decision I was making.

I never knew a life that wasn't bathed in church involvement. Being a preacher's kid, that goes with the territory. I'm thankful that all of my siblings and I came to know and love Jesus, and are still very active in our local churches. I have told people over the years that when I married a minister, I didn't have room to complain,

because I knew exactly what I was getting into! While Matt is a very different person than my dad in personality and interests, they are very alike in how they both love Jesus, their families, and God's people. Years ago, I would never have guessed that I would have the opportunity to follow in my dad's footsteps myself in joining a church staff, but I learned from the best how to love God's people. I learned so much from watching my dad, and I hope I can do it at least a little bit like he did!

My dad shared the communion meditation at his church the Sunday before he went into a hospital. The church staff recorded it, and I'm so thankful I have that to watch and listen to when I want to hear his voice. His is a voice I hope I never forget. That day, he shared from his heart about Jesus and told the Gospel in a few short minutes. The following Sunday he went to a hospital for care late at night, but that very morning he had taught his usual Sunday school class. My sister got to hear his last lesson, and said he did a great job, even though talking had become difficult for him by then. He never wavered in his love for Jesus, and he was actively serving Him right up to the end. He was so ready to go home to heaven! He would – and did – tell anyone and everyone that. It was a great privilege that I was able to be next to him as his faith became sight and he went to be with Jesus – the One he'd loved so well all his life.

My dad wasn't perfect. If he were talking to you today, he would be sure to tell you that. But he was one of the best men I've ever known, and I was blessed to have him as my dad.

Kristie

Save the Date: Thursday, December 10 @ 6pm

We'll gather on this evening for our 2026 Women's Christmas party. Each year, it's an opportunity to slow down and enjoy being together as ladies celebrating the season amidst the hustle and bustle.

More specific details will follow (there will be food and a gift exchange of some sorts); for now, we wanted to provide the date so you can put it on your calendar.

Childcare will also be available for this event if/as necessary, so please let Kristie know if this would be helpful for you.



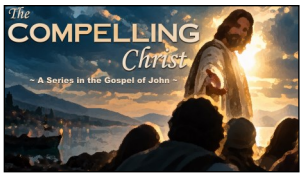
women set apart
WSA

We're already well into 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").

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 a reminder, for content, ***we're using this as an additional D-Group opportunity (see page 17 for more on this).*** We will wrap-up this semester the week before Thanksgiving, so, the last WSA for 2026 will be on Thursday, November 19 (as Wednesday, November 18 is the last evening of CULTIVATE).

Our Upcoming Preaching Calendar



Through the first two or three weeks of November, we are continuing our Fall 2026 sermon series in **the Gospel of JOHN.** We've called it ***"The COMPELLING Christ."*** As of the end of October, we have made our way through chapter 9 in what's been a valuable journey; by the end of the series, we will have covered a good portion of the first 11 chapters.*

As we have seen, John includes the material he does about Jesus - much of it unique when compared to Matthew, Mark and Luke - as part of a strategy to help his readers see Him more clearly. He has a well-defined agenda or goal in all of this: through such clarity, he wants people to respond by *BELIEVING* in Him to find the life that's only available through Him (remember the purpose statement in 20:30-31). *Whether leading to first-time faith or bolstering existing faith, John knows that Jesus, because of His unique identity, deserves and demands a total life response*. We're using the word "COMPELLING" because it fits with this purpose. John writes with the conviction that if he simply shows Jesus as He is (*i.e.*, through a lofty prologue like in 1:1-18, through the telling of His impressive "signs," through words He spoke in dialogues, through what He offers, through His "I am the ___" statements, etc.), then people will be so drawn to Him, that they will come to believe in Him. It's what we hope is happening through this series: **a right RECOGNITION of Jesus that leads us to a right RESPONSE to Jesus.**

As a reminder, usually on Fridays, we provide on "The Southland Scoop" a preview of what portion of John we'll be looking at for the upcoming Sunday.

**** An encouragement: as we finish up this series of John, we encourage you to be reading along with us, even to the end of the Gospel. It's a great way to develop familiarity with the whole book, including the parts we might not focus on in this series.***

Beyond the series details, here are a few upcoming ENCOUNTER-related specifics to mention:

November 1 … as part of our time, we'll be recognizing and participating in the **"International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church"** (see p. 19 for more about this annual day).

November 29 into December … we'll be in our annual Christmas focus.

December 13 … this is a special morning on our calendar (see p. 3 for more): our Children of Praise production - called **"Christmas in Reverse"** - with a devotional focus into the Lord's Supper.

LIVE

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/@southlandcc/streams. 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.**

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 part of what our CONNECT Groups are about - a small group **relational** setting for **reflecting on God's Word** and **praying *together***.

At this point, our **"regular" Connect Groups** are meeting at 9:15am on Sundays (note: we also have Sunday School classes for all ages of kids/youth during this time). Besides listing our current groups below, there's a half-sheet flyer at the Welcome Center listing them. We have tried to get good coverage across the various life stages/demographics:

- **A group for college-age students - called "Launch"** (in Room #5)
- **A group for young adults, those entering the career stage, including young families - called "Voyage"** (in the Great Room)
- **A group generally for those still in the stage of life juggling responsibilities with work, family, etc. - primarily with older kids, even those who are grown** (in Room #7)
- **A group generally for those who are in the retirement stage of life** (in Room #6).

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 get connected with others!

Connect Groups are meeting each week during November (see below re: 11/1) and on December 6; *we will not be meeting from December 13 through December 27 - including no programming for kids/youth - unless an individual group decides to continue on during these weeks*.

An Upcoming "First Sunday CONNECTION" at 10am - 11/1

As highlighted on page 2, as we did on October 4, we host such times as opportunities for church-wide connection over breakfast items and coffee. Groups are dismissed early on that day and we gather in the Fellowship Hall/foyer area for this informal time . Everyone is invited to join us!

NOTE: *When we host these times, Jessica also has a CONNECTION time for kids - special breakfast treats for them and games; they are meeting in Rooms 1 and 2.*

GROW DEEP MINISTRIES

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



Wednesday evening CULTIVATE - our Fall 2026 session ends November 18.

As is our custom with CULTIVATE, we wrap-up our Fall semester on *the Wednesday before Thanksgiving week.* At that point, our D-Groups will have made it through the rest of our journey as we've been "Walking in the Footsteps of Faith" (various OT stories). That's been our content focus for this Fall semester. We have already covered a lot of ground - from Abraham to some of the last kings of Judah - and will continue that for the last three Wednesdays of CULTIVATE. Each week, we provide a guide to supplement reading through the text of Scripture. *These can be accessed throughout the semester at the display in the foyer or electronically: https://gosouthland.org/ministries/cultivate*.

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

From there, we'll take a break throughout the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons, before resuming sometime in January (we'll share that specific date later on). As we move toward that point, we'll communicate more specific plans for the Winter/Spring semester. Even if you haven't been able to join us this Fall, that re-launch will be a great opportunity to get involved on Wednesday evenings.



OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD UP

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

Opportunities to Serve & "BUILD UP" the Body

Just like any FAMILY, we function as we do *because of the willing-hearted volunteers* who choose to embrace opportunities to BUILD UP others through serving. As we move even further into a new ministry year, there are several areas in which we regularly need volunteers.

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.

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)

A **"THANK YOU"** to the many who helped with our 2026 **"Fall Family Fun" event** back on October 18.; it was another great autumnal evening being together!



It's hard to identity everyone who helped by name, but here are some to mention:

Some stuck around after service on Sunday morning to help get the auditorium set-up - a special thanks to **A.J. + Chloe Gegg** for specifically helping in this way along with **staff families** (as well as any others we might have missed).

To the Smiths for providing the hay bales.

There are many who helped with kids' activities - monitoring inflatables (provided by Jump Mania) or helping with kids crafts, temporary tattoos, etc.

To Jake & Kendall Miles for helping recruit and play with the band in the courtyard

We had good help getting the meal ready - of course, that includes all of those who brought delicious chili or soup - and cleaning-up afterwards; **thanks to Kristie for leading this charge** with help from **Debbie DeNovi** and **Carol Ricke** as well!

As much as staff does *(and that is a lot for such an event - **with a special shout out to spouses and kids of staff who regularly pitch-in!**)*, there are so many others who volunteer and serve to make events such as this happen. We couldn't do it without you!

(We usually try to keep a better list of names to identify those who served at such an event, but we didn't get that done this year … our apologies for not being more specific.)

SERVING SCHEDULE for November 2026

	Foyer Hosts (10:15 on, through whole service)	Greeters (at the doors from 10:15-10:40)	Serving Team Leader
11/1	Chris & Debbie DeNovi	*T.B.D. - CONNECTION Time*	Mark Miller
11/8	Ernie & Charlotte Emmerton	Room #6 Connect Group	Doug Graves
11/15	Ben & Debbie Jennings	Room #7 Connect Group	Deckard Family
11/22	Doug & Susan Graves	"Voyage" Connect Group	Les Londeen
11/29	Pat & Debbie Little	"Launch" Connect Group	Les Londeen

	Nursery workers (all morning)	Wee Kid ENCOUNTER & Li'l Kid ENCOUNTER	Kid ENCOUNTER (1st - 5th grades)
11/1	Lillard Family	*Anna R./Lex R.* Jessica C./Caden Y.	Jessica Young/Cary Swadley
11/8	Kristin Londeen and Harmony Martin	*Darrell & Lisa D.* Aiden S./Isabelle L.	Jessica Young/Dylan Young
11/15	Wilcox Family	*Ezri Smith* Jessica Y./Caden Y.	Thomas & Stef Hall
11/22	Harnstrom Family	*Ella W./Eden M.* Debbie Hoenshell	Sandy Arneson/Becky Kurth
11/29	Deckard (Will and Ashley) Family	*Harmony M./Olivia S.* Sonya Simpson	Sean & Megan Falconer

LIVE OUT MINISTRIES

... a path for putting faith into action.



Our annual Thanksgiving Baskets effort is happening NOW!

We participate in this project each Thanksgiving season. It's a great way to LIVE OUT faith and bless others during a time when the need seems even greater. *See the display for instructions.*

We need donations returned to the display area by Sunday, November 15. *There is no need to return the cards themselves as the number of cards represents the number of an item we still need to have donated.*

NOTE: If you want to participate, but are not able to purchase supplies directly, please feel free to contribute through a monetary donation. You can do that via check (put "Thanksgiving baskets" in the memo line) or by using the Tithe.ly online platform/app (choose the "Thanksgiving baskets" option - see page 4).

To keep you informed about Southland's foreign missions partners, we strive to provide updates when available. This is really the only way one of our partners can communicate (and what they send now comes primarily via e-mail). Their location makes any online presence too risky from a security standpoint. *Let us know if you want us to help you sign-up to receive their regular e-mail communications.*



CENTRAL INDIA CHRISTIAN MISSION

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.

Life of Hope Ministries

Two Upcoming GLOBAL-Connected Opportunities:

IDOP
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER *for the* PERSECUTED CHURCH

Sunday, November 1 - We are again be participating in the annual **International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church.** Many believers in Jesus around the world today "share our faith, but not our freedom" as they face constant and, at times, intense pressure. We participate each year in this special day as part of our ENCOUNTER service. It's a time when we raise awareness, but, most importantly, when we pray – expressing our oneness with them as we intercede on their behalf.

A Special Opportunity - ICOM in St. Louis. This year's International Conference on Missions is being held on **November 12-14, 2026** in St. Louis. This is an annual missions gathering for organizations and workers connected to our "brotherhood" of churches. *Especially because it's so close to us this year,* we are supporting it through a special church registration which provides a reduced cost for those who are part of Southland. *See the sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center (or talk to Rick) if you are interested, but haven't made that known yet.* Even if you are not going in-person, there is a virtual option; to register, go to the following website **https://www.theicom.org/attendees** - use the code **2026onlinestl** to participate online.

ICOM
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MISSIONS