



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

The Southland Vine

For OCTOBER 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.



Southland's Fall Family Fun

Sunday, October 18
(4:30-7:30pm; supper at 6pm)

**You're invited to join your
Southland FAMILY for this
fun Fall-themed event.**

See page 2 for details.

**The event's activities start at
4:30pm with a soup/chili supper
served at 6pm, then s'mores in the
courtyard after supper.**

What's Inside:

- 2-4 **Southland FAMILY News**
- 4-5 **Other Info. + What's Happening at SCC (includes calendar)**
- 6-7 **Southland KIDS**
- 7-10 **LES' LATEST WITH GROUP HUDDLE AND MS/HS NEWS**
- 10-11 **Southland Women**
- 12 **ENCOUNTER**
- 13 **CONNECT**
- 13 **GROW DEEP**
- 14-15 **BUILD UP (serving schedule)**
- 15-16 **LIVE OUT**

We plan to publish the next edition of *The Vine* at the end of October.



Be watching for details this month as we begin this annual project to bless others!

Southland "FAMILY" News

A brief look back to the month of September:

Within the Southland family, September represents an important-and-busy month as we launch into a new ministry year. Many of our ministries resume after being off for the Summer (*i.e.*, Wednesday evening Cultivate, Group Huddle and W.S.A.). All in all, it's been a great kick-off season as things are now rolling along - a great start to a new ministry year in our church family!

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 - some for the whole Southland family and others within our ministries for specific groups. While there is much more information that follows, we want to make sure we especially highlight the broader FAMILY-wide impacts here in one spot:

Our next "First Sunday CONNECTION" - October 4 @ 10am

It's been several months, but, when the calendar permits, we host these times (on "first Sundays" of the month) 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 one at the start of October, on 10/4 - and, we'll host one at the start of November, on 11/1, as well.



Our annual "Fall Family Fun" event is coming soon - Sunday, October 18 from 4:30 to 7:30pm (with supper at 6pm)

This is an annual autumnal event when we come together to enjoy some fall fun together as a church family. As in the past, we have various activities planned for all ages - many of them outdoors, including inflatables - so good Fall weather would be great! As part of the evening, we will enjoy a delicious chili/soup supper at 6pm (see below on this); we're also planning on s'mores with marshmallows cooked over fire pits in the courtyard. *Also, one highlight of this year is live music from a Christian folk band that Jake & Kendall Miles are part of; they'll play from 5-6pm, then from 6:45-7:30pm - both times, in the courtyard (in the event of bad weather, in the Great Room).* All in all, we're looking forward to a fun, relaxed time together as a church FAMILY!

Here's some information about what we need you to know and do to make this event happen:

- ⇒ **We need volunteers to prepare and bring soup/chili for supper.** You can sign-up at the display in the foyer.
- ⇒ **If you're not bringing soup/chili, we ask that you bring some sort of dessert (like cookies or brownies).** The church will provide all that's needed beyond this - like crackers, shredded cheese, supplies for s'mores, etc.

If you're at all connected to Southland, you're a part of this family, so come join us!



THANKSGIVING Baskets

As we make our way toward the Thanksgiving season, we will be starting the annual process for our “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 will be communicating more details about how you can participate during October. As always, this will include the opportunity to donate items to help us build the baskets.

December: “A Church FAMILY Christmas”

This is how we package the Christmas season at Southland. Just as families have traditions for the season, so do we as a church FAMILY. It may seem like a long way off, but it will be here soon. For now, see page 5 for a few specific dates that have already been set for this season: specifically, our Thanks-Mas dinner (12/6), the women’s Christmas party (12/10) and the C.O.P. morning (12/13).



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!

There is nothing really new to report on this process except progress in the re-zoning effort. As mentioned before, there are still steps that have to be taken by the developer before we are able to finalize and close in the Spring of 2027. We’ll keep you up-to-date as things continue to unfold; for now, continue praying about this opportunity and its impact on our church family.

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.





Occasionally, we like to bring attention to RightNow Media, a valuable ministry tool that we have available here at Southland.

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

OTHER GENERAL REMINDERS & INFO



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 such a payment, we do ask that you cover any charges. There is certainly no requirement to use this tool, but we are grateful to have it available for those who choose to use it.



FINANCIAL UPDATE ... For September 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: September monthly tithe = \$31,160⁰⁰ (4 Sundays) Average weekly tithe = \$7,790⁰⁰

This is the first month in our new ministry year. As a weekly average, that total puts us in the \$405,000 range; while that's well below our need, it's not an unexpected start given past years.

As we shared last month, thanks to a great August, we did finish the last ministry year near where we needed to be with our giving (an annual tithe total of \$467,792). We were short of our goal, but not too far away from it. *Thank you for your ongoing faithful giving to Southland!* Because of the way we finished last year, we do still have some good levels of reserve. Also, our budgeted tithe need for this year is down a bit from last year - in the \$473,000 range. 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."

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 13. As a reminder: we are meeting as normal for October and November, including "First Sunday CONNECTION" times at the beginning of each month - at 10am on both 10/4 and on 11/1.



Sunday mornings at 10:30am ... our ENCOUNTER service - the time when we gather as a church FAMILY to meet with God; you can join us "in person" or online via the live stream if you cannot be here. See page 12 for more.



Sunday evenings from 6-8pm ... Group Huddle for middle school and high school youth (see pages 8-9). *We're now at the point in the year where this is meeting each week - albeit with an adjustment on October 18 for our annual Southland-wide Fall Family Fun event.*

Wednesday evening CULTIVATE, a "GROW DEEP" ministry ... 5:30 for dinner, 6:30 for ministry programming each week, including D-Groups. See page 13 for more.



Thursday mornings (10am start time) ... WSA - Ladies' Bible Study (see p. 11) - *WSA is again serving as a D-Group (the same content), just on Thursdays instead of during CULTIVATE.*

Specific Events to Highlight (listed by date):

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

Sunday, October 4 ... after several months, we'll have another "First Sunday CONNECTION" at 10am (9:15am groups/classes still meet, just with an earlier end time - see p. 2).

Friday, October 9 ... Life of Hope's annual event in Joplin; see page 16 for information.

Wednesday, October 14 ... the youth group's annual trip to the Cornfield Maze (see pp. 9-10).

Sunday, October 18 ... our annual "Fall FAMILY Fun" event - check out page 2 for details about the evening.

Mid-to-late-OCTOBER into NOVEMBER ... during this stretch of time, we invite you to join us in our annual "Thanksgiving baskets" effort.

Friday, October 23 from 6-8:30pm ... a Ladies Craft Night (see p. 11).

Sunday, October 25 at noon ... next meeting for "Open Hearts, Open Homes."

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

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

Sunday, November 1 ... on this morning, we will again be participating in the annual "International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church" (see p. 16).

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

Sunday, November 8 ... the first pre-registration deposit (\$90) for those students attending the 2027 MOVE Conference next July; see page 10 for specifics.

Thursday, November 12 through Saturday, November 14 ... ICOM in St. Louis; see page 16 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. 7).

Sunday, December 6 ... our annual "Thanks-Mas Church FAMILY Dinner" at 5pm.

Thursday, December 10 @ 6pm ... Southland Women's annual Christmas Party.

Sunday, December 13 ... our 2026 Children of Praise production during our 10:30am time; *see pages 6-7 for more information.*

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 October and November, including "First Sunday CONNECTION" times at 10am on 10/4 as well as 11/1 (kids have their own time).

CHILDREN'S
Sunday School

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 October.



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 October, the focus is on 1 & 2 Samuel.

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!



Parts and solos have already been handed out. Please be working with your child(ren) on memorizing those - this needs to be done by November 4.

See the note on the previous page (in green) for details about a special Sunday practice option for kids who want to participate, but cannot attend on Wednesday evenings.

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:



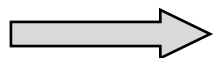
"Super Start" is a high-energy C.I.Y. event designed especially for pre-teens (kids in 4th, 5th and 6th grades). It's become a great annual tradition for our kiddos! This year, we are attending this event at a different location - in Bentonville, AR on January 22-23, 2027 (it's typically been in Tulsa). 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 additional details in the months to come.

Info for all Kids/Youth

At a parent information meeting back in September, we distributed our **"Hold Harmless Forms"** for the new ministry year, an unfortunate, but necessary part of church ministry today. *If you were unable to attend, we have these available (ask Les or Jessica for a copy); please make sure to sign and return one as soon as possible.*

LES' LATEST

There are some things people avoid without even realizing it. Awkward conversations. Messy situations. People who feel different, broken, or hard to understand. It's easier to stay close to what feels familiar and comfortable. But during Jesus' ministry, no one was avoided more than someone with leprosy. Lepers were forced to live apart from everyone else. Their disease slowly damaged their skin and nerves, leaving wounds they couldn't feel and scars they couldn't hide. But even worse than the sickness was the isolation. They couldn't go into town. They couldn't worship at the temple. They



couldn't be near their families. If they came close to anyone, they had to shout, "Unclean!" so people would move away. Could you imagine that level of loneliness?

Mark 1:40-41 records an encounter between a leper and Jesus: "

And a leper came to Him, imploring Him, and kneeling, said to Him, 'If You will, You can make me clean.' Moved with pity, He stretched out His hand and touched him and said to him, 'I will; be clean.'"

When the leper came to Jesus, he knelt and begged. He knew Jesus had the power to heal him, but he wasn't sure Jesus would choose to. After all, this leper has dealt with nothing but rejection from everyone, and all of that is what makes what happens next so powerful. Jesus healed him, but he didn't do so from a distance. Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him. Think how long it had been since anyone had come close to this man, much less touched him. No handshakes. No hugs. No high fives. No arms around the shoulder. Just distance and rejection. So, Jesus touched him, not to push him away, but with compassion. That touch, said, "You matter. You belong. You are not untouchable."

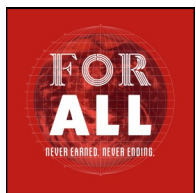
In that moment, Jesus didn't just heal his skin; He restored the leper's life. With one touch, the man could return to his family, find work, worship with others, and live without shame. Jesus didn't just remove a disease - He restored a person. If you've ever felt unseen, unwanted, or pushed aside, this story connects. Jesus continues to move toward people whom others avoid. His love crosses every boundary because He is truly for us.

The leper didn't just need healing. He needed to be seen, accepted, and touched. When Jesus reached out His hand, He crossed every boundary that kept people apart. His touch told the man he wasn't forgotten or untouchable. And the Good News is this: Jesus still come close to people today!

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: "For All"



The truth of the Gospel is this: **God's Grace is FOR ALL.** The Good News of Jesus has always been an invitation. Not for the perfect or the put-together, but for the broken, the searching, the doubtful, and the overlooked. Jesus didn't come for only a select few. He came so that everyone could experience forgiveness, new life, and real hope. The message doesn't exclude, overlook, or leave people behind. It meets us all on level ground because the Gospel isn't just for some - **it's FOR ALL.** Join us Sunday nights at Group Huddle Bible Study as we search the truths of this new series entitled, **"FOR ALL."**

Upcoming GROUP HUDDLE THEMES:

Sunday, 10/4 **"Pretzel Fest" ...** Meet us in the foyer for our version of Oktoberfest with cheesy pretzels and root beer.

Sunday, 10/11 **"Go Big' Game Night" ...** What do you get when you combine toilet plungers and rubber chickens? A memorable night of fun group games!



- Sunday, 10/18** **No regular Group Huddle** - we encourage students instead to come and enjoy Southland's "Fall Family Fun" event from 4:30-7:30pm.
- Sunday, 10/25** **"Show Me School Spirit"** ... "We've got spirit, yes, we do; we've got spirit, how 'bout you?" Represent your school with apparel and flair!
- Sunday, 11/1** **"Costumes and Candies"**

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). 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 p. 4 for more on using Tithe.ly).*

Parent volunteers are also welcome/needed to help with meals; there is a sheet at the youth display in the foyer where you can sign-up to take a turn.

GROUP HUDDLE and CHILDREN'S MISSIONS:

Each year, we identify a missionary or missions organization we can support through the school calendar year. This September, we're introducing our newest partner: **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 this semester, our students have the opportunity to pray for our mission partners and give financially during both "Kid ENCOUNTER" and Group Huddle.*



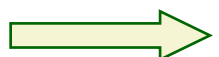
MORE MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

SUNDAY SCHOOL (starts at 9:15am on Sunday mornings): We have separate Sunday School classes for our MS and HS youth. *Both meet in the Gathering Room - it has a divider with two separate rooms - off of the Great Room. **We are meeting as normal for October and November, including church-wide "First Sunday CONNECTION" times at 10am on 10/4 and 11/1.***

Wednesday Evening CULTIVATE (6:30-7:45pm): "Biblical First Aid for Teens" (see below re: 10/14) - Do you have questions about God, faith, friendships, stress, purpose, or the problems you face every day? **You're not alone!** Join us at CULTIVATE Youth where we'll talk honestly about real-life struggles and questions of faith as we discover how God's Word can give us help.

**It's almost time again to
"Get Lost" in the Giant
Cornfield Maze in Aurora!**

**Wednesday evening, October 14
from 5-9pm - instead of CULTIVATE**



This event is for middle school and high students *(we will have worked it out so that younger students typically in C.O.P. will be able to attend).*

Join your friends in testing your sense of direction at the giant cornfield maze. You can enter at dusk or wait until dark for the creepier journey. Enjoy roasting hot dogs as well as s'mores over a fire pit; chips and drinks will also be provided for supper.

Cost is \$15/student; that includes the maze, life-sized boxing robots, the food mentioned above, a scenic hayride and the mechanical bull. *Invite your friends and sign-up at the display.*

In the event of bad weather, regular CULTIVATE activities will take place instead.

FOR SENIOR HIGH STUDENTS



Due to space limitations, **registration for the 2027 MOVE Conference (for the '27-'31 graduating classes) actually happens *this* Fall to ensure spots.** We are planning to return to the University of Nebraska (Lincoln) - a conference held July 11-16, 2027.

NOTE: Sign-up at the youth display in the foyer to reserve your spot. Les has to have a basic registration number in early October to make sure we reserve our place. *Because of this, and we know it's early, but the first pre-registration (\$90) is due Sunday, November 8.*

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Southland Women

The world around us can feel like a lonely place. Many neighbors are rarely outside; they open their garage door as they pull in at night, and then, they only open it again when they back out to leave again. Most stores have self-check-outs, so you don't have to have a conversation with a cashier anymore. You can opt to have your groceries and goods delivered to your door, and you only interact with your computer or phone to place the order. It's the same for ordering take-out: often you may place your order through an app, then just grab your bag off a shelf when you pick it up. We ask our phones or computers for information, and rarely ask a human. As technology takes over more and more of our lives, we have to interact with humans less and less. That's not a judgment on whether it's right or wrong! It's simply the way life is right now.



While we may have simplified some aspects of life with less human interaction, I believe God has wired us for connection. It may be becoming more rare, but I think it is a basic human need. Some need more or less than others, but we all need relationships. Church family can be a place where some of the need for connection can be met. Sunday mornings are well-suited for basic greetings and general conversations, and D-Groups become a place for deeper connections and conversations. Connect groups fall somewhere in the middle; both light-hearted conversations as well as deeper topics are often covered each week.

As we've begun a new ministry year here at Southland, I hope you will take every opportunity to connect with your church family! We have weekly times to participate and connect with others on Sundays and Wednesdays; and, we



also have events coming up in this calendar year to have even more connection. On October 18 is our annual Fall Family Fun event for everyone (see page 2 for more on that event), where we will eat and have fun together; I'm guessing that, if you come, you'll have good connecting conversations, and you'll be glad you came. Then, on October 23, we're hosting a Ladies Craft Night (see below) to give ladies an opportunity to eat, visit, and work on creating something cute to take home. Then, before you know it, we'll turn a few calendar pages and arrive at Thanks-Mas on Sunday, December 6 - another whole-church opportunity to spend the evening together.

We need you here! We need to see you using your gifts to build up the Body. We also want to connect with you so you know you are loved and cared for here. Please join us as much as possible as we follow Jesus together!

❤️ Kristie



We originally scheduled this event for earlier in the month, but moved it to Friday, October 23.

Join us for supper and crafting! We'll provide the meal and supplies for some simple Fall-themed projects. Of course, feel free to bring a craft project you're working on as well. Either way, come, relax and enjoy the evening with other Southland ladies!

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 celebrating the season amidst the hustle and bustle. More specific details will follow; for now, we wanted to provide the date so you can put it on your calendar.



We're already a few weeks 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*. Among other benefits, this provides an opportunity for those who are unable to be involved on Wednesday nights ... perhaps even because they're serving elsewhere during CULTIVATE. Check out information about our D-Group content on page 13 of "The Vine" or at the display in the foyer; you can also find a guide for each week's session there as well.



WEEKLY ENCOUNTER

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

Our Upcoming Preaching Calendar

As we move into October, we are already into our Fall 2026 sermon series. Typically, we use this time of year to focus on a specific book of the Bible. This year, we have landed in the Gospel of JOHN with a series we're calling **"The COMPELLING Christ."** John makes clear his reason for writing with a purpose statement in 20:30-31 - it's to help his readers (including us) see Jesus more clearly and, as a result, to respond by *BELIEVING in Him* so that we find the life that's only available through Him. 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 lofty words like those in 1:1-18, through His impressive signs, through encounters He had, through words He spoke, etc.), then people will be so drawn to Him, that they will come to believe in Him - whether with first-time faith or ongoing faith. It's what we want to happen through this series: a right RECOGNITION of Jesus that leads us to a right RESPONSE to Jesus.

So far in this series (through the end of September), we have focused a lot on Jesus' identity through an overview of the book as well as content in chapters 1 and 2. Over the next several weeks, likely even into November, the journey continues as we move through John, especially the first 11 chapters. We are not able to hit all of the material along the way, but our goal is to see Jesus more clearly through the portrait John has provided. So you know, each week, 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 continue making our way through John over the next several weeks: be reading along with us. It's a great way to get familiarity with the whole book, even the parts we might not focus on in this series. In fact, we won't go beyond chapter 11, but it's a good opportunity to still finish reading through to the end.



We continue to offer a LIVE STREAM of our worship service through Facebook LIVE. *You can access it directly from our website itself:* <http://gosouthland.org/watch-online> *or through our general/public Southland Facebook page.* Even though this format is not as ideal as "in-person" participation - the much better

way of joining us for our weekly ENCOUNTER - we do value this online option as an alternative. Whatever the reason you are not able to be present with us in-person, you can still stay connected to your church family in this way.

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

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



YouVersion

CONNECT GROUPS

... a place to discover Christian community.



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

This is still a great time of year to get plugged-in to one of these groups where you can CONNECT with others in the Southland family. Our **regular CONNECT Groups meet each week at 9:15am*** (note: we have Sunday School classes for all ages of kids/youth as well at this time). Stop by the Welcome Center for a flyer with more information about these groups, including a list of ones that are currently meeting. **Please don't hesitate to ask if you need help deciding which group is best for you; we'd love to help you find one!**

* A Schedule note: We are meeting as normal throughout October and November.

An Upcoming "First Sunday CONNECTION" at 10am - 10/4

As highlighted on page 2, through it's been a while, 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 to snack on and games; meeting in Rooms 1 and 2.*

GROW DEEP MINISTRIES

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



We're currently in the midst of our Fall 2026 CULTIVATE session.

Once more, here is a link to a flyer with details about this semester: **Fall 2026 CULTIVATE Session.**

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; *see the kids' and youth section for more details about their Wednesday evening plans.*

Our D-Group focus for Fall 2026 is on OT stories - "Walking in the Footsteps of Faith." Each week, we provide a guide as a supplement. *These can be accessed throughout the semester at the display in the foyer or electronically at our website - linked here: <https://gosouthland.org/ministries/cultivate>.*



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

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 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.

A **"THANK YOU"** to the many who have helped with keeping our grounds looking good during the past several months - mowing, trimming, etc.



Here are the family names included on our 2026 mowing schedule: **Arneson, Brothers, Constantine, Deckard, DeNovi, Easter, Harnstrom, Jennings, Little, Martin, Pryor, Randleman and Wood.** As we reach the end of the mowing season, a big, heartfelt **"thank you"** to each of

you for all you have invested in this way; also, a big **"thank you"** to **Rick** for organizing this (as well as the extra work he puts into it) and to **Bob & Liz Wood** for the "extras" they do in this area.

We want also to express a **"thank you"** to a team of people who regularly serve behind-the-scenes **in the sound/tech booth.** The following individuals are currently involved, helping with sound, lights or the computer: **Megan Falconer, Dan Gray, Tommy Hall, Gavin Harnstrom, Zac Jennings, Aiden Simpson, Karl Simpson** (involved typically all but one week out of the month, as it's been for years now) and **Sonya Simpson.**

Ephesians 4:11-16



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

SERVING SCHEDULE for October 2026

	Foyer Hosts (10:15 on, through whole service)	Greeters (at the doors from 10:15-10:40)	Serving Team Leader
10/4	Ben & Debbie Jennings	<i>T.B.D. - CONNECTION Time</i>	Mark Miller
10/11	A.J. & Terra Gegg	Room #6 Connect Group	Doug Graves
10/18	Matt & Kristie Martin	Room #7 Connect Group	Deckard Family
10/25	Les & Kristin Londeen	"Voyage" Connect Group	Les Londeen

	Nursery workers (all morning)	Wee Kid ENCOUNTER & Li'l Kid ENCOUNTER	Kid ENCOUNTER (1 st - 5 th grades)
10/4	Harmony Martin and Zoey Smith	<i>Ezri Smith</i> Madison L./Caden Y.	Jessica Young/Cary Swadley
10/11	Wilcox Family	<i>Ella W./Eden M.</i> Sonya Simpson	Sean & Megan Falconer
10/18	Aimee Harnstrom Kristin Londeen	<i>Anna R./Lex R.</i> Harmony M./Olivia S.	Thomas & Stef Hall
10/25	Graves Family	<i>Talia Stone</i> Debbie Hoenshell	Sandy Arneson/Becky Kurth

LIVE OUT MINISTRIES



*... a path for putting
faith into action.*


www.maranatha
biblecamp.org


a community of students pursuing Jesus
www.cchonthe.net


CROSSLINES
COMMUNITY OUTREACH
www.crosslines.org

 **PREGNANCY
CARE CENTER**
www.417pcc.org

www.show-mehome.com

Show Me
Christian Youth Home

www.occ.edu



Our annual "Thanksgiving Baskets" project is quickly approaching!



Each year in the Thanksgiving season, the Southland FAMILY blesses those in need through this effort. We have done this LIVE OUT project for several years now during the months of October and November. Sometime this month, we'll share more information and actually begin this project. Be looking for what you can do to be a part of this and bless those in need during this season!

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.*



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

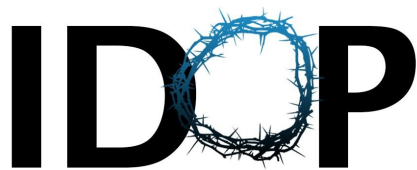
Check out the website for “Life of Hope Ministries” at www.lifeofhope.org. Through our connection with this organization, we are privileged to partner with various ministries on the ground in Guatemala.



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

Also, on Friday, October 9, 2026, Life of Hope is hosting its annual event at Hope City Church in Joplin (starts at 6:30pm); the cost is \$60/person. Rick has shared a graphic with information on “The Scoop,” including a way to R.S.V.P. if you are interested in attending. This is a good way to support our ministry partner in the work being done in Guatemala.

Two Upcoming GLOBAL-Connected Opportunities:



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER
for the PERSECUTED CHURCH

Sunday, November 1 - We'll 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. That provides anyone from Southland who wants to attend the opportunity to do so at a reduced cost of \$20 for an individual or \$40 for a family (this fee is only for the conference itself). You can go to <https://www.theicom.org/attendees> to register and use these codes - for an individual (attending “on site”): **2026stladult** ... for a family (again, attending on site): **2026stlfamily** ... for virtual: **2026onlinestl**. There is also a sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center if you'd like more information and/or are interested in attending.*



ICOM
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
MISSIONS