

When I think of serving, I think of Steve Dyer. Why is serving so important to you? What's made that such a big part of your heartbeat? Well, thanks. God's really blessed us and opened a lot of doors.

We moved back here and we were living in the country building a house, and Pam and I individually started coming to this conclusion that pursuing our own interests is not what God wanted. It wasn't going to be fulfilling for us. And it wasn't going to change the world, so we started looking for places to volunteer. Are there any particular stories that stand out to you over these years that you've served in the church, like any memorable moments that have been really impactful on you personally? There's one, and it has to do with New Hope for Families.

The hospital had told us we've got to leave those houses. We looked at over 200, to some level, properties, couldn't find anything or couldn't get an offer accepted. And so we were out of options, and we sort of jokingly said, this is sort of when God comes along. And He did. I mean, there was like 15 different things, unlikely things that had to happen, and we made it.

At that point is when I said, instead of me trying to do my life and find some time for God, I'm going to— I now understand I need to be serving God and find a little time for some other things. What would you say that your prayer is for our church in this season right now? Every single person in this congregation, old and young, everybody would find their niche where they can use their God-given gifts, their talents, their experiences, you know, their passions. They find a spot And they can serve God and others there. And I will tell you, that's where Pam and I have found purpose and meaning in life.

Well, good morning. After last week's fiasco, I watched that countdown timer like a hawk. I was not going to be stuck, caught up in the story again and late to prayer. Preach. It's good to see you all here today.

Over the summer, I got to rebuild our deck in our backyard with the help of my father-in-law and my dad and some neighbors and friends who came over to help from time to time. And the deck was 12 feet by about 30 feet over a walkout basement. And so it was a pretty big project and it required a lot of different tools to use to be able to make it happen and complete it. And this is actually my dad's old toolbox. I think it was one of his very first-time kind of adult big-person jobs.

He worked in Mount Vernon, still got the ticket or the little printoff right there for that. And so some of the tools that I got to use for that project, I got to use, I mean, obviously a hammer. You need a hammer whenever you're doing something like that. Had tape measure. One of my most handy things, a speed square.

This thing was always within reach. This was a fun tool. Has anybody

ever used one of these things? Seen what this is? This is a palm nailer.

You hook it up to an air compressor and it drives the nails. And so those where the joist hangers are, those hard ones to get into, just kind of use that to be able to drive those nails. That was a fun one, of course, a drill. And then every pencil that I had was on the project because it seemed like every time I needed one, I'm like, where is my pencil? And so I just had them scattered throughout the job site and everywhere.

But my favorite tool that I got to use was this. I mean, this thing is a blast. If you've ever used a Sawzall, I'm like, what else can I cut? This is amazing. Amazing.

And so I predominantly used this tool to take down our old deck, making some cuts and trying not to hurt myself. Or a fun part of that doing it by myself was like making sure that none of the joists that were hanging 9.5 feet in the air didn't swing back and go through a window in our house. We did not need another project on top of this one. I would use it to make some rough cuts in the framing part of the project. But here's the thing, this is a great tool.

It's a lot of fun to use and it's really good at what it does. You can put the right blade in here and it is going to cut through just about anything. But this would not make a great tool for hammering in a nail. It would not make a great tool for driving a screw. It would not make a great tape measure.

You know, nobody would be like, I need a board that is  $8\frac{3}{4}$  Sawzalls long. Like, it's not made for that. This tool was built for a purpose. And it doesn't matter if it is in the hands of a pro like my guy Ted Denny over there, or if it's in the hands of an amateur like me, There's only so much that you can do with each one of these tools that it took all of them and more to come together to be able to complete the project. It took all of them coming together to be able to build something.

And the same is true about the church. A single tool, take that however you want, cannot build a church. At least not a healthy one. I mean, a church can be built around a personality, but then that personality fades or leaves, and then what is it left with? A church can be built around a program or a group, but then that program changes or the group leaves, and what is it actually built on?

What's the substance? And when Jesus says, I will build my church, he did not mean I'm going to build it through one person or even a handful of people. He's not looking and going, I'm going to build it through these disciples right here. No, he had in mind that he was going to build his church through all of his people coming together,

using their gifts, for a common good. Jesus builds his church as every part plays its part.

We see that in our text today. If you have a Bible or Bible app, uh, turn to 1 Corinthians 12. It's where we find the passage that Quentin read for us earlier.

And last week we looked at the church in its infancy.

Everything that we read about in the early church between Acts 1 and up to like Acts 6, we get a few different descriptors of this early church and things are new and they're exciting. It's fresh. In Acts chapter 2, our text from last week, Luke paints this picture of the early church that was devoted to Jesus and one another. And if Acts chapter 2 is a picture of a church that is devoted to Jesus and one another, then the book of Corinthians is like whatever the exact opposite of that is. This church was a mess.

If the early church devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship and to the breaking of bread and prayer, if they had everything in common and were united, Man, this church that Paul is writing to would sound maybe a little bit more like this. They devoted themselves to their favorite teacher and to cliques, to eating with people like them and to arguing over who mattered most. Everyone was impressed by spiritual gifts and many used their gift to draw attention to themselves. All the believers were together and they had very little in common. And I think that's a pretty good description of this church in Corinth.

We see a church that is divided over their favorite preachers and leaders. They would brag about who baptized them. Their worship gatherings were chaotic and confusing. They were dragging each other to court to settle their differences. There was a guy who was sleeping with his stepmom.

And all the while the church is celebrating this, like, ah, to each their own.

There's quite a difference in pictures between these 2 churches. And here's the thing, the church in Corinth was incredibly gifted.

They had strong teachers, they had strong leaders, they had remarkable spiritual gifts, they had financial resources. It— we even see that they were capable of practicing incredible generosity. And Paul says in this letter to them that they lack nothing. They don't lack a single spiritual gift. What they lack was maturity.

Yes, this church in Corinth was incredibly gifted, But they were also incredibly immature. And in chapter 12, Paul confronts the immaturity that they have around using their spiritual gifts. And so let's go

back up to verse 1.

So he kind of transitions. He's been talking about some of these other immature things that, that they're living in and calling them to greater holiness and And then he changes the subject and he says, now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed.

That word is translated elsewhere ignorant. I don't want you to be ignorant.

It's more than just not knowing something. Ignorance is when you act in error because of either what you don't know or what you don't understand or what you are confused about.

And the people in this church, they were only using— many of them were only using their spiritual gift to lift themselves up, to impress others. They were using them outside of their intended purpose in a way that Paul says is uninformed and ignorant. They were using them to build themselves up. And not only was this causing division in the church, but it was weakening the body of Christ. Paul tells us in Ephesians chapter 4 that, that gifts are given and that when we use these gifts, the church is built up to maturity.

So as people were misusing their gifts or maybe even putting their gifts on the shelf, The body of Christ was not able to grow to maturity.

When I say spiritual gift, I'm not just talking about like a natural talent or ability. Spiritual gifts are something that God gives us. It's a spiritual gift. It's an expression of God's grace. That's like the root word of spiritual gift is grace.

It is given. To his people for the building up of his people. And because these gifts are given by God's grace, like, we have no room to boast in them. We have no room to shine a spotlight on ourselves and say, look at how incredible my gift is. We have, we have no room and no right, honestly, to think less or speak down of somebody else's gift that God has given them.

They are an expression of his grace. They are given to us by our heavenly Father for the building up of his church. You could say that God's gifts were given to you, but they were not given for you. We are to humbly use our gifts for the strengthening of the body of Christ, to build up his church. That's what they were given for.

But this church in Corinth, they were boasting about their gifts. They were using them for their own gain and glory.

And so there were gifts like, like teaching and, and prophecy and

speaking in tongues. Like these things were, were elevated as being like most important because people were impressed by them. Like, wow, look at how spiritual that person is. Look at how gifted that person is. People with those Those gifts, outward gifts like that, they were being celebrated.

They were being treated like royalty within the church, given special places, and many of them enjoyed the spotlight, busting out their gift almost like they're an amusement at a circus.

And meanwhile, those with less flashy or upfront gifts of service and leadership and administration were being looked down upon, made to feel like, oh, my gift doesn't really matter. If it doesn't really matter, then maybe I don't really need to use it.

And so you have this dynamic where, where some people developed a bit of an inferiority complex about their gift. And they said, well, because I'm not like them, I must not matter.

And on the flip side, you had people who developed a superiority complex over their gift and they would say, well, because they're not like me, they must not matter.

And so Paul writes this letter and he says, hey, about spiritual gifts, I mean, read between the lines, like, stop being ignorant, stop doing what you're doing.

And he, and he writes in, in verse 4 through 7, as I read these verses, just listen to how Paul confronts specifically what is going on in this church. And so he says, there are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, But in all of them and in everyone, it is the same God at work. In other words, like, who are you to think that your gift is any better or more important than anyone else's?

Now to each one, the manifestation of the Spirit, like, like the manifestation of that gift that he has given, is given for the common good.

So did you hear it? Like different gift, same Spirit, different service, same Lord, different kinds of workings, same God, different tools, same project, different purposes and abilities, but same tool chest.

Different workings and what they do and purpose, same builder.

And the goal of spiritual gifts is not for everybody to become a drill or a sawzall or a tape measure or a speed square. Like, that's not the goal of spiritual gifts. It's that everybody takes what God has given

them and uses it to to build something that is better than what we can build by ourselves, that is more important. Every gift matters because every gift was given for the common good.

And so the gifts that he goes on to talk about, they're still gifts that are being given to the church today, gifts the Lord gives by his grace to build up his church.

He continues to give gifts of wisdom, the Spirit-given ability to apply God's truth to real-life situations in a way that helps others know what to do.

I think about this gift and man, some of the first people that come to mind in our church are our elders. I can't tell you how many times we've been sitting in meetings and we've been praying and trying to discern a decision and what to do. And then one of the guys will just say, speak up and it's like, man, that is the exact word of wisdom that this moment needed. And we as a church are better because of that.

The gift of knowledge is the Spirit-given ability to understand and communicate truth clearly for the benefit of others. I think of my friend David Schunk who is able to understand and communicate truth clearly and passionately and like I have benefited from that, and I've seen others benefit from that too.

A gift of faith. It's not the gift of like saving faith, but the gift of the Spirit-given ability to understand or to get confidence in God's power, his promises, and his faithfulness in a particular situation.

It's this gift of trusting and resting in the Lord. I think of Peggy Welch, who just walks in such abandon to Jesus and every situation that she's in. Her confidence in the Lord increases and it inspires my own confidence.

Gift of healing, Spirit-given ability through which God brings physical or emotional or spiritual restoration to others. And, and there are some who will say, well, I mean, these kind of you know, more sensationalist gifts maybe aren't really needed in the church anymore. We don't see those, and so maybe God's just kind of stopped giving those gifts. But, but boy, don't tell that to my friend Claudia Mitchell.

I have no idea how many people Claudia's helped. I, I don't know that she's ever physically healed anybody. It wouldn't surprise me, but emotionally Spiritually? I mean, count me as one. I imagine some of you too.

Prophecy, the Spirit-prompted speech that communicates God's truth for

the strengthening, encouragement, and comfort of his people. We oftentimes hear prophesying and we think like it's telling the future, but actually more often than not, I mean, like 75% of the times when prophecy is written about in scripture, It's not a forthtelling. It's not like predicting that something is going to happen. It is a word from the Lord spoken to his people, sometimes as an encouragement, oftentimes as conviction. Hey, stop being ignorant.

That type of thing.

It's someone who is able to just recognize the voice and the truth of God that aligns with scripture and then speak it to somebody else. I think of Claire Roth. It was a God-given way of sending me and others messages that, that the Lord's put on our heart for us or for our church. And it's like they just hit at the right time.

Claire wrote out the read and response prayers that we've been doing during this sermon series. And, and I think that is They've been an example of both her gift, but, but also how these gifts are given for the common good to edify and build the church.

The gift of speaking in tongues, it's a Spirit-enabled speech and a language that, that was not learned by the speaker and may or may not be a language that is known to others, but it is intended to glorify God. And when interpreted, build up the church. And we see the gift of tongues given in a way where people were, were able to communicate the gospel so that people could hear it in their own heart language.

The gift of tongues is kind of this, this undoing of the Tower of Babel that, that we read in Genesis and, and allowing this common language to be spoken in a moment to, to spread the gospel. And I don't fully know what the gift of speaking in tongues fully looks like today, to be honest. I know that there are some things where that seems maybe a little bit sensational and not quite orderly, like what Paul is talking about in 1 Corinthians 12.

It's not just babbling or speaking incoherently. There's always an interpretation that comes from it or language between person and God. And so I think of 3 different people in our church who have just kind of opened up and shared with me. They wouldn't want me to mention their name, but they— their prayer life is so intimate that they often find themselves speaking to God in a language that they don't really understand, but it's a connection that they experienced to the Lord.

And while that gift may be expressed in a personal way, the fruit of it is seen as I watch these people in the depth of their faith and their care for others and how they are helping other people grow in their faith.

I think of John Ray and the blessing that his gift of teaching has

been to our church over the years. Scott and Suzanne Fuson and their gift of leadership and how it strengthened our ministries and other ministries in our community that they serve. Steve Dyer, we just saw his gift of serving has been a blessing to countless people who, who, who have been served by Steve, but who also have been drawn into serving because of Steve. I think of Betsy Smith and her gift of administration that keeps our young adults ministry organized. I think of Steve and Dorothea, and AJ who stick around after the 11 o'clock service with trash bags to clean up communion cups and coffee cups.

And I think of the crew in here that stays to flip this room so that our middle schoolers can come and worship. Different gifts, same Spirit. Different service, same Lord. Different kinds of workings, Same God.

Each gift is given by the Lord and is used for the building up of his body. And Paul says later in verse 22 that each one of these gifts is indispensable.

And so the body of Christ is not built around a few impressive people. It is built through the faithful contribution of many different people. As we close today, I want to invite Alan Veach to join me up on stage just to share real briefly some ways that we can put our gifts to use this fall. Alan, thanks for joining me, man. Thanks for the invite.

Yeah, absolutely. So tell us a little bit about Carefest, what it is and why we are doing it. Yeah, well, for those of us who have been at the church for some time, Carefest isn't new to Sherwood Oaks. I think The last iteration may have been around 10 years ago, and Brad Pontius used to lead that. But to boil it down really simply, Carefest is a half-day opportunity for us as a church to get out in our community and give back to those organizations that mean so much to us.

Specifically, it is November 7th, and that's a Saturday. But just to ease everyone's fears, IU doesn't play football that day. That's like our off day, right? No conflicts. It's an off day.

It's like the Lord planned it for us. That's exactly right. Thank you, Jesus. No excuse. Yes.

So we're going to gather here starting at 8:00 AM on Saturday, November 7th. We'll have a kickoff here in the fellowship hall, and then we will really just send everyone out in the community to spend 3 hours giving back and looking forward to just engaging with those community partners that mean so much to us. Yeah. And so I just imagine we're gathering in this room and then there's just cars pulling out of the parking lot, going out on mission to serve with these organizations that are doing great work in our community. Yeah, that's the goal.

It's a big day. We have lots of projects. I think the toolbox here is a great example of that. No matter what your tool, your gift is, what tools are in your toolbox, we've got a place for you. So we have lots of community partners.

I just grabbed a few off of the registration website. Places like Wheeler Mission. Steve mentioned New Hope for Families, Boys and Girls Club, PALS, Christian Student Fellowship, the Hoosier Hills Food Bank. Those are just some of the partners that we'll be working with. And we'll be doing things like leaf cleanup.

Your Sawzall— there's a bathroom remodel, so there's a great chance we might get to use the Sawzall for that. I am in. Like, let me know when and where. Carpentry, but really it'll be indoors, outdoors, lots of community partners. When you go onto the website, the registration site, you'll be able to see all the community partners listed there, so you'll be able to find a partner that maybe meets your purpose, yeah, or find a job that really fits your toolbox.

So when you go into the registration site, you'll be able to see the partners and the jobs, and so you can pick and choose which of those you might want to have. But yeah, 8 AM, everybody's gonna gather, and then just imagine cars scattering all across the community. Yeah, to go care. To go care. And so real quick, I mean, are there other jobs than just like physical manual labor?

Are there some ways that people can connect that doesn't require picking up a tool? Yeah, there are all kinds of jobs across the community. And I would say if you were to look on there and you were to find an organization that speaks to you and you were looking at that job and there might not be something listed there, sign up anyway and make your own job. Perfect. These organizations need people that can help them, and, uh, just, uh, being there to support the team, uh, is also super important as well.

That's so cool. So how can people get signed up? Yeah, I, I, uh, left my card sitting over there, uh, but there's a couple ways that you can get signed up. So one, there, uh, on the website at, uh, [socc.org](http://socc.org), uh, I think it is forward slash learn. That's not learn, it's forward slash something.

Uh, but you can go on the website locally. Locally. Locally. Locally. That's what it is.

It is locally. So you can go on the website and sign up. Uh, you can also use the QR code, uh, that's there. There are some cards on the back table that you can grab on the way out. Uh, and if you don't grab that card today, you can grab a card at the kiosk outside the main, uh, worship hall, uh, each Sunday.

Awesome. Alan, thank you so much for joining us, man. Thanks for your leadership in this. Really appreciate you. I'm so excited that we are able to bring this event back with some fresh vision and purpose and connection behind it.

So I'll close with this. Jesus builds his church as every part does its part. And I'll just say the 8:00, you all, this service, It really is my favorite time on a Sunday morning to gather here with you guys. I look forward to this. I see just so many people in the room who have been living this out, not, not for years, some for like decades serving this church.

We are a healthy church, not because of our elders, not because of our staff, not because of tools like Quentin. Like, we are a healthy— sorry, throwing some shade on you, bud. Quentin, I love you. Okay, uh, we are a healthy church because we are a body of Christ where everybody is using their gift to serve Jesus. And, and so the question is like, what part are you playing?

God has given you a gift for the common good. Are you using it? There's so much joy is found when we do. There's a place for you, not just here to serve, but, but if you're here today and you feel apart from Jesus, there is a place for you in the body of Christ. And Jesus made a way for you to, to not only receive a gift, but to receive the gift of being a part of his family.

New purpose, new life that can be yours in him. And if you want to talk more about that, I'd love to meet you right up here. Why don't you stand with me? I'll close us with a word of prayer. God, thank you so much for the way that you have designed your church.

I look at it and it's just— I mean, of course there's so much wisdom behind it. And Father, you have made us with our gifts and and our talents and our abilities, and you have given us through your Holy Spirit a certain gift that is used to build up your church. And so, Lord, I pray that we will use it. I pray that we will step into whatever area you have invited us and that we will be a part of what you are building here at Sherwood Oaks, in our community, and around the world. I pray this in Jesus' name.

Amen.