



At Countryside Covenant Church, we are a Community growing in the Grace and the Truth of Jesus Christ as we ...

- Worship
 - Disciple
 - Serve
 - Multiply



VOLUME 24, ISSUE 4

April 2025

The Same God Yesterday, Today and Forever – Pastor Jon Black

COUNTRYSIDE COVENANT CHURCH
PO BOX 765, 940 E. NORTHVIEW AVENUE, MCPHERSON KS 67460

THE PULSE OF COUNTRYSIDE

I am currently reading through the Bible using the Bible Gateway app. In it, I receive three daily Old Testament chapters and one New Testament chapter each morning.

Recently, I have been struck by the seeming contrast between Old Covenant and New Covenant. It can appear that the God found in the Old Testament chapters is a God full of judgment and anger, while the God of the New Testament is much more patient, loving, and gracious. But we have been taught that our God is unchanging, the same yesterday, today and forever.

So how can we reconcile judgments we read about in the Old Testament with Jesus' promise of grace and forgiveness in the New? This is a common question especially for those who are struggling through difficult life circumstances, be they physical, relational, emotional, or spiritual.

Someone might ask: "Is my pain a result of God's judgment on my sin?"

During this Easter season we celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus promising complete forgiveness and a brand-new life in

Him. We are reminded that "there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." But is this promise only applicable to those who don't mess up too badly?



I was getting more and more discouraged reading through the Old Testament Law highlighting its blessings for the obedient and curses for the disobedient.

Deut 28:15 - If you do not obey the Lord your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come on you and overtake you... (I will let you enjoy reading through all of the specific curses found in the rest of the chapter.)

How have I disobeyed? Oh, let me count the ways. Consider the Ten Commandments:

#2 - Who doesn't struggle with placing other things or people above God? (idolatry)

#4 - Who is not guilty of neglecting to set aside a day of dedicated worship and rest? (sabbath)

#6 - Who doesn't harbor bitterness and unforgiveness in their hearts toward others? (murder)

-continued on page 2



Every person 55 plus growing in relationship with Jesus Christ and serving in His kingdom ministry.

Crescendo Ministry is not “youth group for older adults.” While we engage in hosting activities, we seek to cultivate a serving mindset among us. As long as we’re alive, God has something specific in mind for us to participate in for His kingdom. How are you currently serving the Lord’s kingdom?



Pat Shaft (on ladder; white shirt center)

Pat’s reflections on how she has benefitted from serving on the *Crescendo* ministry leadership team:

When I was a winter visitor to Arizona each year (snowbird!), *Crescendo* made my transition to plug back into church at Countryside easier by connecting me with peers.

I got to know others and stay active by going on walks and hiking with *Crescendo* friends.

I engaged my passion for serving others: I participated on the Kansas City mission trip where we painted a ministry office and served meals to the homeless. Conversation was rich and powerful. I went to Covenant Cedars Work Weekend in the spring with a team to help open camp for the summer. I served breakfast to the Brush Up Mac crowd. These are very special memories for me.

Crescendo helped me:

- ⇒ Live life with challenges. I received help from attending Cov Talks.
- ⇒ Accept changes in life and move forward where God was calling me.
- ⇒ Know God does have a plan for me. I just need to listen to Him!
- ⇒ Enjoy this season of life with the community of our church family.

I say every day: “Today is a Gift!”
Pat Shaft

- continued from page 1 “The Same God Yesterday, Today and Forever

7 - Who doesn’t occasionally entertain lustful thoughts in their heart? (adultery)

#10 - Who doesn’t occasionally become jealous of another’s success and prosperity? (covet)

I, like the Israelites before me, am guilty as charged, thousands of times over. Is that why I am struggling so much? Satan, the Accuser of the believers would lead me to believe this lie and would love to watch me collapse into shame and guilt.

But then in my daily reading, I came to Deuteronomy 30 which focuses on the heart of repentance. It highlights the person who recognizes his or her guilt and turns back to the Lord for forgiveness. And this is God’s response to such a heart.

Deut 30:2... and when you and your children return to the Lord your God and obey him with all your heart and with all your soul according to everything I command you today, 3 then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you and gather you again from all the nations where he scattered you.

Throughout the Old Testament, we read descriptions of the patient and longsuffering heart of God toward His disobedient people even as we see in the New Testament. This merciful God is One...

...who does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. - Ps 108:10-12.

This God of the Old Testament is the very same God who would ultimately and perfectly reveal Himself in the New Testament in His Son, Jesus Christ; the One who is the same yesterday, today and forever. Have a Happy Easter celebrating your forgiven and new life in Christ.





Connecting women to each other and to Jesus!

ALL DAUGHTERS BRUNCH: Women's Ministry is excited to announce a special event that will be held on **Saturday, April 26!** Join us at 10 am for All Daughters Brunch, a special gathering for girls and women of all ages. This casual and fun-filled morning is designed to celebrate relationships and connections beyond family ties. Enjoy brunch, an engaging activity, and meaningful connections as we explore our Identity in Christ as Lori Shultz shares with us. You'll love to get to know Lori better as she has a heart for women's ministry and brings with her many years of serving in her home and church. You will need a ticket(s) for this event and they can be purchased on Sundays, April 6, 13 and 27 or in the Church Office during the week beginning April 7. They are \$6 each; children 5 & under are free.



SERVICE PROJECT: Once again, we've been asked to provide lap blankets for cancer treatment patients at McPherson Hospital. We'll have pieces of fleece that you will

finish the edges by cutting and tying them available soon in the foyer.



BIBLE STUDIES are winding down for this spring semester but announcements regarding one or two starting up in June will be in the May issue of The Pulse. Approximately 70 women have participated in three different studies this winter and have truly been challenged by God's Word. Praise God!

THE GATHERING TABLE:

Because women long to be known and to know others, this is an opportunity to connect with and experience community in a much smaller setting. When signing up, you will be given a choice to either be a hostess (hosting 5 other women in your home or in a coffee shop or restaurant, or the park, for example) or being a participant (one of those 5 other women). The hostess will confer with those assigned to her group and a date will be set when the group will get together. In addition, she'll let you know what you are to bring ... whether it's a dish to share if you are enjoying a meal together, or what the plans are for the time together. Each group is encouraged to meet once in May, again in June and one more time in July, for two hours with the focus of the time considering a Bible verse, answering a few Christ-centered questions, and then praying for one another. The sign-up table will be available three Sundays in April. Be sure to stop by and get your name on the list!



Finally, I had mentioned in my March article that Women's Ministry is looking into **discipleship and/or mentoring** for women. God has very



plainly given us the task to "invest" in women's lives and, as a team, our current goal is to have this task ready to offer in the fall. If this is something that you would be interested in on either side of the equation, please feel free to contact me.

Happy Spring!

Linda Totman, Women's Ministry Coordinator

SEW & SHARE

The ladies that meet once a month have such a great time as they gather to "work on" projects for different missions. And, they'd love to have you join them! **In April they will meet on Monday the 21st at 9:00 a.m. in Room 5.** It's a great way to serve and to help others.



Countryside Kids

KINGDOM FAMILIES | APRIL 6 | 9:45 AM | STUDENT CENTER

April will be our last Kingdom Families for the school year! We hope that all K-5 families can join us as we share about what we learned from the *What Can I Do* challenge from last month and kick-off our summer adventure!



COUNTRYSIDE BLOCK PARTY | ANNUAL END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

At the end of each school year we like to take some time to gather as we remember and celebrate how God has been at work through the ministries at Countryside. This is for all ages (children - adults)! We have a fun evening planned with mini golf, bounce house, inflatable obstacle course, corn hole, and of course lots of food! We encourage you to invite your friends and neighbors as well!

CCBC WORK WEEKEND | APRIL 18-19

You are invited to join us as we help complete some spring projects at Covenant Cedars Bible Camp in Nebraska. Families with children are welcome but keep in mind there is no childcare so little ones would need to be with at least one adult in your family the entire time. We can usually find projects for elementary kids but again it will still require parental supervision. Transportation, lodging, and meals at the camp are covered. We will plan to leave early Friday morning and return Saturday evening. Please contact Michael or Amy Brunk for more details.

COVENANT CEDARS BIBLE CAMP | 1ST - 6TH GRADE

This summer, we're excited to invite our campers to join us for our theme, "Prodigal." Luke reminds us that we have a Father who loves us no matter what - in fact, He wants to bring us back home to Him! Go online to find your camp week and dates, then get registered! cedars.org. Scholarships are available. Contact Amy for more details.



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE



WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5
We can shine God's light.	Jesus is the light in the darkness.	We can choose Jesus .	God hears our cries.	Jesus died and rose again!

"The Lord is my light and my salvation - whom shall I fear?"
Psalm 27:1a (NIV)

KIDS TOWN | SUNDAYS | 9:45 AM | AGES 2 - 5TH GRADE

In the dark, a world of neon colors comes to life. Whether it's the soft green of glow-in-the-dark stars or the bright colors of bioluminescent creatures, light can break through the darkness. When the world needed some light, God sent Jesus because He glows in the dark, and He can teach us how to shine with God's light, too! In this five-week series through the Gospels, we'll follow Jesus' life leading up to Easter to see some of the ways He can shine bright in our lives. As we explore, we'll see Jesus is the light in the darkness. We'll also learn how we can choose Jesus and know God hears our cries while celebrating how Jesus died and rose again!



Make plans for your child to attend our summer VBS at Countryside Covenant Church this summer! We have a fantastic week planned where kids will learn how to find their way in a world gone wild. We have Jesus - our true north! We hope to give kids a rock-solid foundation and point them to Jesus, their unmovable, unshakable friend forever! VBS is open to kids that are age 4 all the way through kids who have just completed 5th grade! Use the QR code to the right to get your kids registered today!



REGISTRATION

VBS CREW! JOIN US FOR ONE OF THE BEST WEEKS OF THE SUMMER!



Volunteering at VBS is one of the best ways to get plugged in at Countryside and experience community! Not only do you get to spend your week getting to know some amazing kids but you will get to make new friends as well as you serve alongside each other! Use the QR code to the left to see how you can use your gifts to serve!

COMMUNICATION

Most of our communication comes through weekly email and text. If you are not receiving the emails already, please contact Amy to get added to our list! amy@csidcov.org

APRIL

- 6 | Kingdom Families K-5 Families | 9:45 AM | Student Center
- 13 | Palm Sunday
- 20 | Easter Sunday | No Kids Town
- 30 | Countryside Block Party | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM
- 2, 9, 16, 23 | Kids Life | Ages 4 - 5th Grade | 6:15 PM
- 13, 27 | Kids Town | Ages 2 - 5th Grade | 9:45 AM

LIFE STUDENT MINISTRIES

April 2025

Spring happenings are in full BLOOM right now in our Life Student Ministries! And the focus? DISCIPLESHIP and COMMUNITY! Why is this important to teenagers? Because we see this call in the scriptures! God himself exists in community; God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Perfectly insync and functioning as ONE. And we, as humans, are created in HIS image! So we, ourselves- including the teenagers in our lives- are created with a NEED for deep and meaningful relationships.

Over and over again in the WORD, we see this call to meet together, pray together, confess to each other, break bread together, do LIFE together, make disciples, sharpen each other and hold each other accountable.

Building relationships with our youth looks like Bible Studies, CF hour, worship, but also it looks like playing pickle ball, drinking coffee, painting a living room together or eating pizza around the same table. Or even cheering on a basketball team! Growth of life happens in circles, not in rows. So we circle up and do life together a lot!

Upcoming Events

- 4/13/25 Baptism
Sunday
- 4/16/25 Covenant
Cedars Camp Visit
- 4/20/25 Easter Sunday
- 4/23/25 5th Grade Visit!
- 4/27/25 8th Grade Visit!
- 4/30/25 All Church
Carnival





The Meaning of the McPherson Housing Coalition Logo

When McPherson Housing Coalition was founded in 2008, we wanted a logo that reflected our Christian beliefs and served as a daily reminder of why we do this work. My daughter-in-law designed it, and I believe she did a wonderful job.

"Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and He will establish your plans." – Proverbs 16:3

The Cross: Hope and Redemption

- At the heart of the logo, a cross within a window symbolizes Christ's sacrifice, offering hope and redemption. It reflects our mission to serve with love and compassion, just as Christ calls us to help those in need.

"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." – Luke 19:10

The Red Roof: Shelter and Protection

- The red roof represents the blood of Christ, symbolizing sacrifice, protection, and a place of refuge. It aligns with our mission to provide secure housing, ensuring that everyone feels safe and valued.

"But you, Lord, are a shield around me, my glory, the One who lifts my head high." – Psalm 3:3

The House: A Haven of Hospitality

- The house signifies stability and belonging, reflecting biblical teachings of welcoming the stranger. It serves as a reminder of our duty to support those facing housing challenges.

"Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it." – Hebrews 13:2

A Visual Representation of Our Mission

- Our logo embodies Christian values through service, love, and community support. It calls us to action in creating a compassionate and inclusive community.

"Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth." – 1 John 3:18

Moving Forward

As Matthew 25:35-40 (NIV) reminds us: *"I was a stranger and you invited me in... Whatever you did for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."*

As we continue to move forward, our faith grows stronger for the journey, and our lives will never be the same as we follow God's call to help those who feel lost and alone.

Have a Blessed Easter,
Chris Goodson



HE IS RISEN!



Widows Connection

Tuesday, April 1, 9:30 a.m. @
The Cedars Wellness Center.

Spring will have sprung and we will celebrate Easter. Be ready for fun & surprises!

Saturday, April 19, 11:30 a.m.,
Countryside Café

We'll have games, food, fun & laughter!

Countryside Gardens

Have you ever wanted to try gardening? Or have you been a gardener in the past and want to garden again?

We still have several garden plots available at the Countryside Gardens! The plots available are 25', so very manageable if you are just starting out. If interested, come by the Church Office and fill out a Garden User Agreement. A \$30 minimum donation is suggested to help defray the cost of water, etc. If you have any questions or want to reserve a plot, call the Church Office, 620-241-4499. Happy Gardening! :)



LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATE

For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. 1 Corinthians 15:21-22 (NIV)

Spring is officially here. New life comes through Christ. What a celebration of new life Christ's gift of death for our sins and His resurrection is for us all! Thank You Jesus!!

The Leadership Team met for our yearly retreat on March 1st, along with our staff, at First Covenant Church in Salina. We collaboratively came together and spent time in contemplative prayer, silence, solitude and scripture. We reviewed our purpose, tasks, objectives, focus, mission, communication, and experiences. We had in-depth discussions on the spiritual health of our church, on long term objectives, and areas we need to put intent of focus. Holy Spirit was very present in our conversations, which were very good and meaningful. We shared a meal together and we had great intentional conversations. We also made time to share fun and laughter. We look forward to the coming year and the guidance and renewal that God will bring to us all.

At our latest Leadership Team Meeting we looked at and discussed in part what our day in retreat brought, as we will continue to do. Changes in upkeep and repair are continuing to our church building and the care of it, the grounds and garden as well. God is so good in providing the finances made available for that, for building His kingdom, and helping His people and their needs. We also thank you all for your continued contributions that make the giving and needed help to so many possible.

At our Leadership Team meeting, Pastor Jeremy, who was a recent keynote speaker at a gathering held by Open Door Pregnancy Center drew our attention to one of the expansions of their initiatives and the additional need of funds to support the intent of greater recognition of the role of the father and men who need mentoring. As Pastor Jeremy explained that 83% of unplanned pregnancies that lead to abortion is because the woman does not feel supported. We agreed to giving a \$2,000.00 donation to Open Door Pregnancy Center in aid to support their initiative of mentoring fathers of these unborn babies. We are also gauging the need of our missionaries in their additional financial help as well.

Take time to smell the roses.

Reba Becker



Church Life Update



Births:

Noah & Levi, sons of Nate & Lizzy Butterfield. March 1

Wedding:

Sara Lundberg & Ricardo Lopez. February 22.

Thank You's

Dear friends from Countryside Covenant, Thank you for helping the victims of the Eaton Fire by contributing to Pasadena Covenant's relief fund. Your generosity will help take care of those who have lost homes and those displaced awaiting clean-up for smoke and ash damage, both those in our church family and those in the wider community. Thank you for your coming alongside as part of the Body of Christ in this way. Shalom.

-Jennifer Mawhorter, on behalf of Pasadena Covenant Church.

Christian Formation: Please take time to thank your Christian Formation teachers this month as they wrap up your classes. We appreciate their preparation, time, and joy in sharing their gifts of teaching with the body of Christ. With gratitude we say, "God bless you richly for teaching among us!" Josse Allen, Sarah Corcoran, Dr. Jacob and Bobbie Kaufman, Jerry Rogers, Pastor Jeremy Bower, Paul and Jolene Czosnowski, Chuck and Taryn Vetter, LaJane Anderson.



March 2025 Attendance (includes online)

	Christian Formation	Worship
March 2	172	591
March 9	157	524
March 16	123	523
March 23	154	622

March 2025 Giving

March 2	\$20,542.62
March 9	\$21,139.36
March 16	\$19,425.31
March 23	\$20,003.77
Total Y-to-D	\$299,959.89
Giving vs Expenses Y-to-D	(8,560.02)

Countryside Covenant Church
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Your April Newsletter is here!!



Countryside Covenant Church is a body of believers with a heart for Jesus Christ.

This Month at Countryside

Worship Services at 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.

Christian Formation Classes, 9:45 a.m.

APRIL EVENTS (SEE ENCLOSED CALENDAR FOR FULL LIST OF EVENTS)

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1, 19 | Widows Connection |
| 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 | Men's Coffee |
| 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 | Celebrate Recovery |
| 3, 10, 17 | Choir Practice |
| 6 | Kingdom Families, Student Center |
| 8 & 22 | MOMs Group |
| 13 | Palm Sunday/Baptisms |
| 15 | MOMs Playdate |
| 15 | Leadership Team Meeting |
| 17 | Maundy Thursday Service |
| 18 | Good Friday Service |
| 18-19 | Covenant Cedars Work Weekend |
| 19 | Brush Up Mac |
| 20 | Easter |
| 21 | Sew & Share |
| 26 | Women's Ministry Brunch |
| 27 | Last Day of Christian Formation |
| 30 | Countryside "Rock the Block" Party |



Countryside Staff

Jon Black, Senior Pastor

Jeremy Bower, Associate Pastor

Pastor Lynn Black, Pastor of Adult Ministries

Amy Brunk, Children's Ministries Director

Connor Gibson, Worship Arts Director

Lizy Johnson, Student Ministries Director

Linda Totman, Church Administrator

Kim Goering, Office Assistant

Tiffani Eilrich, Children's Ministries Assistant

Keragan Gates, Production Director