



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 8
August 2025

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

THE PULSE OF COUNTRYSIDE

Get Out of the Bleachers

- Pastor Jon Black

Football season is around the corner. There is nothing more exciting (for many of us) than the start of football as we gather together under the Friday night lights of a high school football stadium to cheer on our team.

Most of us are thrilled to cheer on our school team as we consume popcorn and hotdogs and watch 22 guys knock their brains out on the field.

Author John Maxwell notes that most churches bear an eerie resemblance to football games. Crowds of people sit in their seats and cheer on their ministry stars as they do battle in the fields of life.

But being in the company of God's people is not a spectator sport. According to Paul's letter to the believers in Corinth, everybody is called to participate in the ministry battles. (I Corinthians 12:12-29). God equips each of His team members without exception to get out into the ministry field and serve as His hands and feet.

As I look out into our congregation each week, I get encouraged. I see the faces of many who are making an impact for Christ's team (strengthening His church).

I see folks who....

- Mow the church lawn and care for our church facilities.
- Lead Bible studies, life groups,

discipleship groups, and step studies.

- Make and serve meals for those in crisis.
- Serve in external ministries like ReUse It Center, McPherson Housing Coalition, Celebrate Recovery, Save and Share, McPherson Food Bank, Omega House, Garden Ministry.
- Teach Sunday school classes.
- Prepare snacks for fellowship time.
- Count the offerings, fold the newsletters.
- Encourage our missionaries.
- Pray for the needs of our church.
- Hold our babies in the nursery.



And give in so many other tangible ways. This is what makes our church a healthy team.

Thank you for getting out of the bleachers and onto the field.

I have also noticed common characteristics of those who are actively engaged in the ministry trenches. They are the most grateful, joy-filled, and least critical people I know.

As someone once said: *"Only those who are doing nothing have time to criticize those who are doing something."*

-continued on page 2

*-continued from page 1;
"Get Out of the Bleachers"*

Ministry is seldom easy or convenient....but it is certainly rewarding and lifegiving....and the rewards will last even into eternity.

I have left many football games for various reasons:

- Discomfort due to inclement weather or tiredness.
- Boredom knowing that my presence had little to do with the final outcome.
- Discouragement because nobody seemed to listen to my advice....etc.

The same can be true in a church. We can easily become uncomfortable, tired, bored, or discouraged if our participation is only that of a spectator.

But God would remind us that He has recruited us to be a very significant member of His Team. He, as our Coach, is telling us to give our best for the success of His Church in the world.

(And, by the way, if you have ever played under a coach, you will remember that the coach's words are not suggestions).

We are expected to get out of the bleachers and onto the field.

Men's Retreat



Men, mark your calendars for **October 17-19, 2025**, for the annual conference-wide Men's Retreat at Covenant Cedars, Hordville, Nebraska.

Join Pastor Jon as he speaks and facilitates conversations from the book of Daniel – "Forged in the Fire." "Fire doesn't break a man of God – it forges him."

The cost is \$190 – \$225 which includes great meals, lodging, and activities. Registration opens August 1. Look for registration forms at the Information Center or register on the Covenant Cedars website.

<https://www.cedars.org/retreats/men.html>

Widows' Connection Upcoming Events:

- * Tuesday, August 5, 9:30 a.m.,
The Cedars Event Center
- * Saturday, August 16, 11:30 a.m.,
Countryside Café



Contact Judy Blaine; (360) 355-0943, or Becky Hogue; (918) 706-1257, for more information.



LIFE STUDENT MIN

August 2025



MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMP!

At the beginning of July we took eleven middle school students up to Nebraska for camp at Covenant Cedars Bible Camp! We had an incredible week!

This was the first camp experience for some of these kiddos and the Lord moved in big ways, both in individual hearts and corporately!

HIGH SCHOOL CAMP

What a week for our High School campers! We were back at Covenant Cedars, with the **LARGEST** week of camp EVER! We had the honor of taking 21 students with our church. The week was **VERY** buggy but, despite that, it was a blast!!



HELLO FROM ARLINGTON, TEXAS!!



Mission
Arlington + Metroplex
Taking church to the people

We were in Texas!! Our High School students partnered with the Lindsborg Covenant youth group and travelled to Arlington, Texas July 20-26. We took 26 students and 7 leaders with us. It was an **INCREDIBLE** experience serving with Mission Arlington. This week grew us all so much! And what a sweet reminder that God is at work everywhere, and that is a humble experience to be empowered by the Spirit to do His work and share the gospel with joy!



“What We Assume, What We Miss”

Learning to see others through the eyes of grace, not judgment.

Each month, as I sit with the Lord and reflect on what message to share, I ask Him to open my eyes and ears to what He wants me to see. This time, the word that kept pressing on my heart was “*assumptions*.” It started popping up everywhere—conversations, thoughts, and quiet moments of observation. And soon, I realized how much damage assumptions can do.

In our work at McPherson Housing Coalition, I see it all the time. People form opinions about those who live in our cottages. They assume these families are lazy, irresponsible, or undeserving. But they don’t know the real stories.

One family came to us after losing everything in a house fire. Another is a senior whose wife is dying—he sacrificed everything to care for her. These are stories of courage, loss, and love. Yet outsiders make judgments based on what they think they see. They don’t ask. They don’t know. They just assume.

And if I’m being honest, I’ve done it too. I’ve looked at someone and made a silent judgment in my heart. Maybe you’ve done it too. The problem with assumptions is that they distance us from compassion. They harden our hearts and blind us to God’s image in others.

But Jesus didn’t make assumptions. He saw people *fully*. He saw the woman at the well not as an outcast but as someone worthy of truth. He saved

the thief on the cross—not because of merit, but because of grace. Was the thief “deserving”? Are we?

Scripture calls us to humility and mercy. James 2:1 warns against showing favoritism and judging others by outward appearances. And Micah 6:8 reminds us what God requires of us: “*To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*”

As I look around, I see that Oak Harbor Cottages is full. Sutherland Estates is full. The need in our community continues to grow, and still, God brings us people—*His* people—each with their own story and dignity. What if we began to see them as Jesus does? What if, instead of holding onto assumptions, we chose to approach others with understanding, empathy, and love?

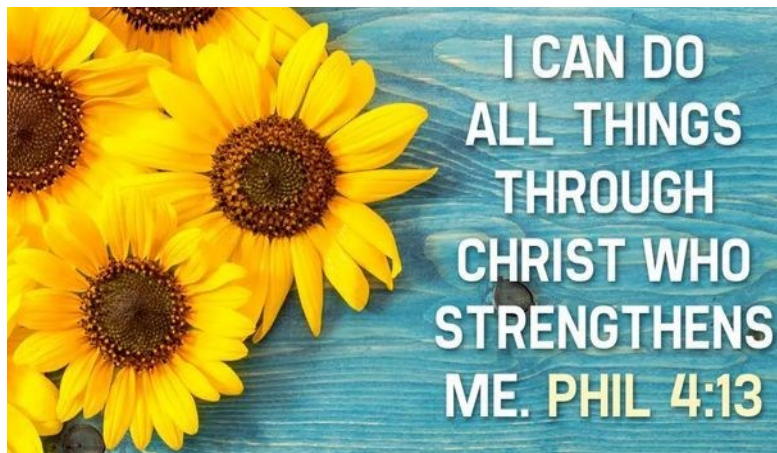
This month on our *Housing for Good* podcast, we had the privilege of speaking with Pastor Jon Black about this very topic—faith and the Church’s role in responding to housing instability. That episode aired the week of July 21st, and I encourage you to listen. His words are a powerful reminder that the Church is called not just to believe—but to act, to love, and to stand with those in need. <https://mcpersonhousingcoalition.org/podcast/>

This month, I’m asking God to reveal where my assumptions may be causing harm. **Lord, open my eyes and soften my heart.** When we truly see people—when we slow down and listen to their real stories—compassion naturally follows. **Help me, Lord, to choose grace over judgment, every time.**


Blessings, Chris Goodson


Sew & Share is back!!

Beginning **Monday, August 17**, we will gather to sew projects and have fellowship together! We will meet in **Room 5 at 9:00am**. Feel free to come and go as you wish. Contact Shirlee Harper, 620-755-1205 with any questions.





♥ UBU ♥ Women's Exercise Group


 **Karen Young-** Already a year and a half has gone by since we first started our ♥UBU♥ workout group for women. It has grown and developed into more than my expectations. The group is so welcoming and committed to meeting with us every Wednesday and Thursday morning to improve their mobility, strength, range of motion, and balance- physically as well as heart, mind and spirit. I wanted a place to work out and get healthy without committing to a membership at a gym, so I figured there must be other women that felt the same way. I felt God put this on my heart and all I had to do was take the next step, which was approaching Linda Totman to see if the church would be open to letting us use the gym. The Women's Ministry Team talked about it and agreed! (God's Hand was there!) After that... The plans just seemed to all fall into place like it was meant to be! God's hand was everywhere. He planned for me to meet Judy Heiman at the first time I attended a new Bible Study and when I asked for prayer about my plan... she was already thinking about how to start a workout group herself. (God's hand again!) So, we became friends and co-leaders of our workout group. Judy plans a low-impact aerobics video for Wednesdays and I plan a strength training video on Thursdays with either weights or resistance bands. We end each workout with stretches and a time of devotion and prayer. The women who have joined us have been an inspiration! They are encouraging to Judy and I and to each other and they are the reason we love to keep this group going. Please enjoy reading the testimonials of some of these ladies below... And decide for yourself if this group might be an answer to something you have been searching for!


 **Judy Heiman-** Exercise has always been a passion of mine. I believe it not only keeps our bodies fit but it also feeds our soul. Getting older isn't always the easiest thing but when you have others to encourage you and share with, it makes it better for sure. I love helping women feel and look their best so when I heard Karen say it was also her passion at Bible Study one day, and that she was interested in starting something at church, I was definitely on board. We have 10 faithful ladies that come and sometimes up to 12. We always have a time of devotion and prayer following our workouts. The fellowship is wonderful and it's a great


way to get to know more women at church. I'm so thankful for this group of ladies! Come join us!


 **Jeri Brooks-** I love: meeting together with other church friends, building our temples on our individual levels, that all are welcome (don't be afraid to give it a try), and that we close with a Bible verse and prayer. There is no judgment, just encouragement! I'm thankful for the commitment of our leaders, Judy and Karen. I had been hoping for something like this class in the past and little did I know that God was answering my unspoken prayer. Lastly, it is so fun!

 **Susan Border-** I enjoy exercising with others. Sometimes my body doesn't like the weight and bands, but when I don't hurt, it makes me feel better.

 **Tamara Power-** The exercise class, led by Judy and Karen has been such a great thing to join since my retirement. Great way to meet women and you don't have to dress up! Working on cardio, strength, balance and stretching. Just good everyday living. I always look forward to Wednesday and Thursday workouts.

 **Jolene Czosnowski-** I love meeting with other women for exercise. It keeps me accountable and improves my health. The fellowship, devotions, and prayer time make this hour super special!

 **Deborah Steel-** I was happy when this first started. I really enjoy the group experience while doing exercise. It's enjoyable with friends. I really like the variety of the videos and different moves. Each of us can participate at our physical level. I've noticed an improvement in my flexibility. Very thankful for this group opportunity.

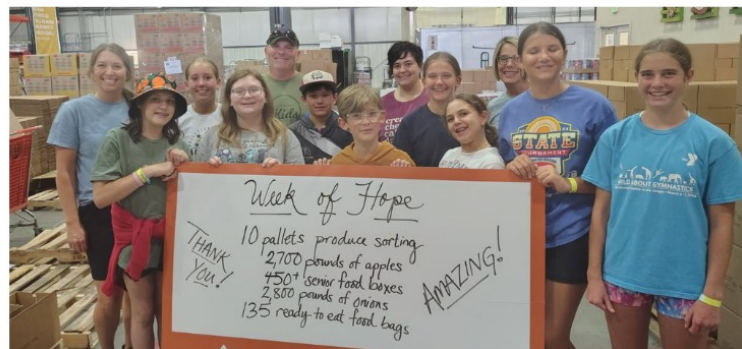
 **Kerri Snell-** One thing that I appreciate about this church is our embrace of diversity of spiritual gifts and touchpoints for believers to connect with God and others. The exercise group has been a welcoming place for me, a place where moving our bodies becomes an act of worship that connects me both physically and spiritually. I have made new friends and felt more motivated to make healthier choices for myself. I love ending our workouts with a devotion. I encourage anyone who is looking for an exercise group to give this a try. I have been blessed.



Countryside Kids

WEEK OF HOPE | PRETEEN MISSION TRIP

We had five students that traveled to Loveland, CO for Week of Hope in July! They joined about 60 other students from different states and spent the week serving at the Weld Food Bank in Greeley, CO. We also got to serve alongside some students from First Covenant in Salina!



GATHER MOMS

Sign-ups for Gather Moms (our new mom's group) will begin in August! Our mission is to help you connect to other moms who get you, who know your joys and your struggles, and who can offer support and encouragement. Check out the table in the foyer on Sundays this month. We will have info at the kick-off event as well!



AUGUST COUNTRYSIDE KIDS CALENDAR

3	Sunday	Kids Praise 8:30 & 11:00 am
10	Sunday	Kids Praise 8:30 & 11:00 am
17	Sunday	Kids Praise 8:30 & 11:00 am
17	Sunday	Children's Ministry Training* 10:00 am
20	Wednesday	Children's Ministry Training* 6:00 pm
24	Sunday	Kids Praise 8:30 & 11:00 am
24	Sunday	Children's Ministry Training* 10:00 am

* This is our annual training for anyone serving with children at Countryside. This is required, and you just need to attend one of the offered trainings.

SEPTEMBER

KIDS LIFE BEGINS ON SEPTEMBER 3RD
KIDS TOWN BEGINS ON SEPTEMBER 7TH

COVENANT CEDARS BIBLE CAMP

Last month we shared pictures of our Pathfinder and Explorer campers at Covenant Cedars and this month we have pictures of our Trailblazer campers! Another great summer at CCBC!



FALL KICK-OFF



WEDNESDAY
AUGUST 27TH
6:00 - 7:30 PM

Come for a meal and
homemade ice cream and
check out different ministry
opportunities this fall at
Countryside

CHILDREN
YOUTH
& ADULTS



FALL KICK-OFF

On August 27th, all ages are invited to our Kick-Off Event! We will have hamburgers, homemade ice cream, and info about ministry opportunities for everyone this fall!

SERVING OPPORTUNITIES IN CHILDREN'S MINISTRY!

As we kick off a new year of classes and small groups, we are seeking more adults who understand the importance of discipling the next generation as they grow. While parents play an important role in their faith formation, we also have a call as the church to come alongside and encourage and equip parents on this journey! We are needing people in the following areas to serve with children:

SUNDAYS

Nursery
Kids Praise Teacher
Preschool Teacher
Kinder/1st Grade Teacher

WEDNESDAYS

Nursery
Preschool Teacher
Small Group Leaders
Game Leader

Thank You's

I didn't expect to get your card about my brother passing so long after the fact, but I am so grateful to have the card at this time because my father-in-law's passing has made this a tender spot at this time. So, thank you so very much for thinking of me at this time.

Love in Christ Jesus, Sarah Walker Goering

Dear Staff,
To the eight members of the staff who signed and sent a lovely card in memory of my sister, Bette, and my son, Terry Schmidt, date of passing on June 28, 2024. You were so kind to remember me & your prayers mean a lot to me. God bless each and every one of you. Love you all!
Sincerely, DeAnn Decker

Dear Church Family,
We are deeply grateful for the outpouring of love and support during this difficult time. Your thoughtful gestures, including beautiful cards, phone calls, meals, flowers, and countless acts of kindness, have been a tremendous comfort as we grieve the loss of my mother, Fran Jones. Thank you, too, for the women who served the luncheon. Our families and friends enjoyed the delicious meal after the service. Many of you have been and continue to be such a wonderful source of strength and blessings.
Vikki and Roger Trimmell

It is hard to describe just how special this church has been to us these past several months as I have undergone my stem cell transplant and waiting period. Your cards, texts, calls, and prayers are appreciated, felt, and needed! I continue with chemo and will know more by mid-August when my test results will be ready. Until then, please continue to pray for full remission, if not cure! With that, we thank God for you and feel a debt of deep and abiding gratitude. Thank you for your support and love during this trying season!

Pastors Lynn and Jon

Church Life Update

White Roses (New Life in Christ):

Hannah Butterfield &
James Butterfield



The McPherson Post Office has made a big change in their mail delivery for anyone that has a PO Box



number. Any mail that is addressed to any other address other than the PO Box number, it will be returned. Therefore, if any mail is addressed to the church with the 940 East Northview Ave address, it is subject to being returned to the sender. Effective immediately, all correspondence needs to be addressed to ...

Countryside Covenant Church
PO Box 765

McPherson KS 67460

It's important that you check with the institution that your check is sent from to make sure that it is mailed to the PO Box. This does affect any and all other correspondence sent to the church as well.

If you have any questions, contact Linda in the Church Office, 620-241-4499.



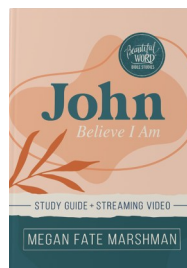


Connecting women to each other and to Jesus!

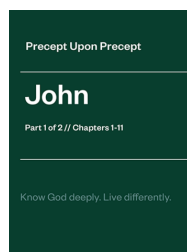


Many are thinking about “back to school” as August is upon us! And with that women’s ministry is thinking about Bible studies for the fall ... the really exciting thing is that all of our women’s studies will study the Book of John and we would love to have you come and grow with us. Here are the details:

- ⇒ Tuesday mornings the study, John ... Believe I Am begins on September 9 and will meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month. Plans are to meet at 9:15 on those mornings and childcare will be by reservation.
- ⇒ Thursday evenings the same study, John ... Believe I Am will be offered. Plans are to meet at 7 pm with the first study being on August 28.



Here’s an introduction to the study: In this eight-week invitation we’ll be able to respond to and really get to know Jesus in a personal and intimate way. This study through the Gospel of John will focus on dissecting His seven “I Am” statements, where we come to learn what Jesus wants us to know most about His character and love for us.



In addition, Kim Thompson will lead a Precepts study on the book of John beginning Wednesday night, September 3 at 6:15 pm. The Thursday morning Precepts study will also study the book of John and their first meeting will be September 4 at 9 am. (Childcare by reservation for both of these studies.)

Books will need to be ordered for all studies. Please contact Kim, 620.755.2138 for the Wednesday night study, Michelle Logback, 620.242.7885 for the Thursday morning study,

and Linda, 620.755.2060 for the Tuesday morning and Thursday night studies.



The MOMs Ministry at Countryside has a new look for this coming school year! There will be lots of exciting news forthcoming and I encourage moms of all ages to watch for information regarding our GatherMoms – McPherson ministry. Not only will there be places to connect with other women, but there will also be opportunities for women to grow through Bible studies, mentoring/discipleship, serving. Maybe you are looking for a group that can provide support and encouragement or you are wanting to connect with women in a specific season of life. Are you at a point where you would like to invest in others through teaching, mentorship and outreach? There’s a simple answer ... get in touch with me because I’d love to have a conversation with you and see where you can connect with other women and to Jesus!



We have agreed to provide homemade ice cream for the Fall Kick-off Event on Wednesday, August 27. Please contact me if you can provide one.

I encourage you to follow us on Facebook ... Countryside Women’s Ministry ... and to check out our page on the website ... Women's Ministry | Ministries | Countryside Covenant Church

Blessings,
Linda



Also, a note about the new chairs ... We’ve added chairs with arms along the back wall in the Worship Center. Please help us “reserve them” for those who have a physical need.

And one more note ... The church’s shop vac is missing. Possibly you borrowed it and forgot to bring it back. If so, please return it (no questions asked).

LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATE

Our summer will soon end. Before we know it school will be in session again. This season is always too short for me. I learn more with each season and the changing seasons of life. Oh, do I ever?! Things I wish I had known or been able to let go of sooner. But God promises to bring His people new things on a continual basis.

*See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. **Isaiah 43:19 NIV** “See or (Behold), I am doing a new thing”:* This phrase signifies God’s ongoing work of something fresh and transformative. It’s not a one-time event, but a continuous process. Just as our lives are both physical and spiritual.

Now it springs up (or forth); do you not perceive it?” Calls for attentiveness and awareness of God’s activity in the present moment. It’s an invitation to recognize and participate in the new thing God is doing.

“I will even make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert”: This is a metaphor for God’s ability to provide solutions and resources where they seem lacking. He can create paths through difficult situations (wilderness) and bring life-giving sustenance rivers in the desert.

In the context of Isaiah: This verse comes after a reminder to forget the past and it’s limitations. It’s a message of hope and encouragement for God’s people, particularly in the midst of exile or difficult circumstances. So, this verse encourages believers to trust in God’s power to bring about new beginnings, to be open to His leading, and to recognize His presence and provision in their lives. It’s a verse that speaks of God’s faithfulness, His sovereignty, and his ability to work in ways that surpass human understanding.

I am continually awed by the new things, new opportunities, new pathways God brings especially in the wilderness or difficult times of life. The hard part is recognizing it.

Most of all, wilderness seasons can sometimes make us forget that God has individual purposes for all of us in His eternal plan. Just as He did for the Israelites, He has a path through the wilderness you may be experiencing to reach the blessings and understanding you so desperately want.

So, we shouldn’t give up hope that nothing will change in our lives. God always has something up His sleeve. And what He brings usually grows us into stronger people of faith and hope.

Trust what God has in store for you, the blessings of this temporary world before we reach the eternal blessing of heaven with Him.

Reba Becker

Leadership Team Chairman

July 2025 Attendance (includes online)

	Christian Formation	Worship
July 6	—	532
July 13	—	529
July 20	—	500
July 27	—	551

July 2025 Giving

July 6	\$38,365.69
July 13	\$21,274.00
July 20	\$18,630.86
July 27	\$16,792.18
Total Y-to-D	\$792,967.66
Giving vs Expenses Y-to-D	(\$51,239.00)



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McPherson KS 67460

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Your August 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.

AUGUST EVENTS

5, 16	Widows' Connection
5, 12, 19, 26	Men's Coffee
5, 12, 19, 26	Celebrate Recovery
6, 13, 20, 27	Time of Prayer
6, 7, 13, 14	Women's Exercise Group
12	Staff Planning Retreat
17	Children's Ministry Training
17	Adult Christian Formation Training
18	Sew & Share
19	Leadership Team Meeting
20, 21, 27, 28	Women's Exercise Group
20	Children's Ministry Training
24	Children's Ministry Training
25	Adult Christian Formation Teacher Training
27	Fall Kickoff Event

Countryside Staff

Jon Black, Senior Pastor

Jeremy Bower, Associate Pastor

Lynn Black, Pastor of Adult Ministries

Amy Brunk, Director of Children's Ministries

Lizy Johnson, Director of Student Ministries

Bobbie Kaufman, Interim Worship Arts Director

Linda Totman, Church Administrator

Kim Goering, Office Assistant

Tiffani Eilrich, Children's Ministries Assistant

