



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 2
February 2025



Growing Deeper

- Pastor Jon Black

If you are reading this, I realize I am 'preaching to the choir', so to speak. Countryside Covenant Church is filled with people who love God and love learning God's Word.

So my ramblings here are to serve as a reminder to each of us to persevere in God's Word. Spending time in God's Word every day is of utmost importance to our spiritual and emotional health. On January 1, I began to read through the Bible once again using the Bible Gateway app on my phone. It serves to keep me organized and to hold me accountable.

Reading through God's Word is much more than an educational experience to gain biblical knowledge. It is a sacred activity that cleanses our souls, renews our minds and aligns our priorities with God's priorities.

Psalm 119:9 - How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word. 10 I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands.

Even though I can't remember what I ate for lunch last Wednesday, I can venture to guess that the food still profited my body....(unless of course if I ate some kind of fast food...which is likely). When we prayerfully consume God's Word, it will always benefit us in some way (whether we feel it or not.)

Jeremiah 15:16 -

When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight.



Professor of Theology at Biola University and Talbot School of Theology, Thaddeous Williams, cited the findings of researchers Arnold Cole and Pamela Ovwigho. After an extensive polling of forty thousand people ranging from eight to eighty years old on the topic of Bible reading, these were their unexpected findings:

- Those who read their Bibles once or twice a week experienced no benefit over those who never read their Bibles.
- Those who read their Bibles at least three times a week experience some minor gains.
- Those who read their Bibles at least four times per week, everything seemed to spike....
 - Sharing their faith skyrocketed 200 percent.
 - Discipling others jumped a whopping 230 percent.
 - Feelings of loneliness dropped 30 percent.
 - Anger issues dropped 32 percent.
 - Relationship bitterness dropped 40 percent.
 - Alcoholism plummeted by 57 percent.

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

THE PULSE OF COUNTRYSIDE



McPherson Housing Coalition

Homelessness

When working with those experiencing homelessness, it can be challenging to understand the reasons why they have found themselves in these precarious situations. Did they make bad choices? Are they lazy? Are they addicts? What exactly has caused these situations? These questions often arise, reflecting the stereotypes and misunderstandings about homelessness.

From a **Christian perspective**, we are called to approach these individuals with compassion, grace, and a willingness to listen. The Bible reminds us to care for the poor and the marginalized, as seen in Proverbs 19:17: "Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward them for what they have done" (NIV). It is not our place to judge or assign blame but to extend love and support.

Homelessness is a complex issue, often caused by a combination of systemic factors and personal challenges. These may include lack of affordable housing, unemployment, mental health struggles, domestic violence, generational poverty, and limited access to healthcare. Many individuals experiencing homelessness are not there because of a single "bad choice" but due to a series of circumstances that have spiraled out of control.

A powerful resource that sheds light on this reality is the Netflix miniseries *Maid*. Based on Stephanie Land's memoir *Maid: Hard Work, Low Pay, and a Mother's Will to Survive*, the Netflix series portrays the struggles of a young mother trying to escape an abusive relationship while navigating poverty, homelessness, and systemic barriers.



Maid offers a raw and unflinching look at how the lack of support systems and accessible resources can trap individuals in cycles of poverty and homelessness. It's a thought-provoking depiction that challenges stereotypes and humanizes those often overlooked or judged.

Understanding the root causes of **homelessness** and addressing these systemic barriers require both personal engagement and societal action. By educating ourselves through resources like *Maid*, partnering with local organizations, and advocating for affordable housing and mental health services, we can begin to make a meaningful impact.

Ultimately, the call is clear: "to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God" (Micah 6:8). In doing so, we not only help transform lives but also live out the Gospel in a tangible and impactful way.

Blessings,

Chris Goodson

- continued from page 1, "Growing Deeper"

- Feelings of spiritual stagnancy fell 60 percent.
- Viewing pornography decreased 61 percent.

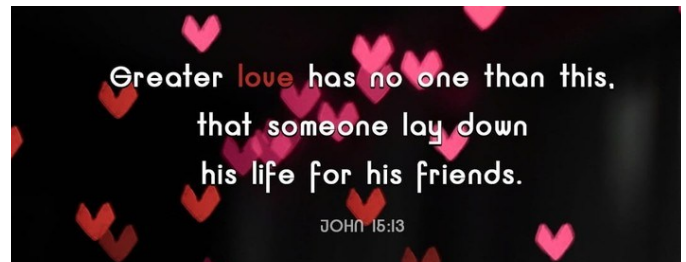
Even more than the many benefits we receive from spending time in God's Word, reading God's Word is a communication event with the living and eternal God of the universe.

God longs to spend time with us. He longs to speak to us. And He longs for us to know Him and grow deeper in our love for Him. Hear His heart when He says....

Jeremiah 29:13 - You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

Jeremiah 33:3 - Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.

Countryside friends, let's commit to continue to make God's Word a priority in our everyday lives as we grow in relationship with our God and our Savior.



Next Step Class

for membership or leadership runs **February 16 through March 9**



on Sunday mornings during the CF hour, 9:45am. Meet others who attend Countryside, engage with the church staff, learn about our church and denomination. Call the Church Office, 620-241-4499, or mark "Next Step Class" on your Connection Card on Sunday to register. Already started a CF class? That's ok; return to your class on March 16 and finish.



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

Crescendo Update

Do you have ideas as to how you would want to spend your later years? Most of us would say we'd like to spend more time with family, stay healthy, and continue to stay engaged in meaningful activity. These are all wonderful goals. Do you have a plan to get there?

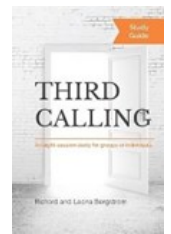
Crescendo ministry seeks to help bridge people into the season we have often referred to as "retirement." Most people are surprised by how the things they thought they would do are not what they end up doing. How to prepare for such a time as this? And most importantly, for the believer, how do we seek God's help in transitioning into this future?

I'd like to invite you to consider joining a small group to explore God's calling on your life in its next season. The time to start planning is three to

five years before you actually take the leap into retirement. The saying is true: If you aim at nothing, you're sure to hit it. I believe the Lord would have us make meaningful, purposeful choices with the help of His Holy Spirit guiding us into the fulfilling future God has for us.

Want to know more? Crescendo will be forming a new 8 week small group designed to help foster your desire to seek the Lord's face for your future. You'll consider your work experience, your talents and giftings, your passions, all the while listening to the Holy Spirit lead. Find community by taking time to walk with others in the same season of life. Maybe you're already in a peer life group and you'd like to explore this together – this could be one of the most meaningful studies you'll ever do as a group.

Contact Pastor Jon or Lynn Black or Pat Shaft if you'd like to explore your future now! **Deadline to sign up is February 23rd.** Ask about the "Third Calling" group.



Christian Formation Highlight - Marriage Class



Whether you're a newlywed or a seasoned empty nester, the Marriage Class on Sunday mornings is exploring practical ways to help you with your relationship on many fronts. This semester we'll talk about finances, communication, intimacy, and "The Art of Marriage." Take time to date your spouse for an hour a week on Sundays at 9:45am and see how marriage as God designed it to be can be satisfying and fulfilling at any age. Room 16/18.



Connections



Your warm smile at the front entrance to the church sets the tone for those who are new to Countryside. When you turn around in your pew and introduce yourself to someone you don't know after worship, you create a welcome that is personal and meaningful. When you take time for conversation with others in the hallways after worship, your connection could be the one thing that encourages a new person to come back again. If you invite someone out to coffee or a meal later in the week, you just might make a new friend! Take time to connect with someone this Sunday through your smile, introduction, conversation, and invitation.

LIFE STUDENT MINISTRIES

FEBRUARY 2025

LET'S HIGHLIGHT OUR LEADERS!



THE HEART BEHIND THE MINISTRY...

How could I not take a month to brag on my Leadership Team?? They are truly the heartbeat behind this ministry. These leaders pour so much of their time, energy, prayer and support into the lives of students! This multi-generational team is patient, passionate, gifted, wise, funny and genuine. I am so very thankful for each of these incredible humans!

Countryside Kids

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

Whether it's a rocket car powered by soda and mints or a tornado in a water bottle, there's so much in our world that can fill us with awe. The world of STEM is full of things that look like little miracles, but they're nothing compared to the miracles God can perform. In this four-week series, kids will take a look at some of the miracles that Jesus performed during his ministry. Through stories showing the power of Jesus, they'll no doubt go, Wow! Jesus has the power to heal, to calm our fears, to provide, and to save.

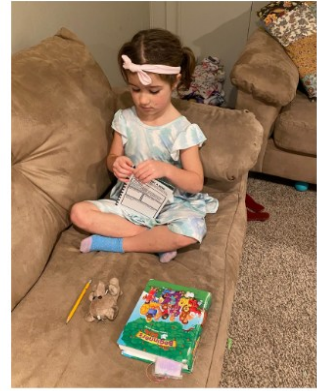
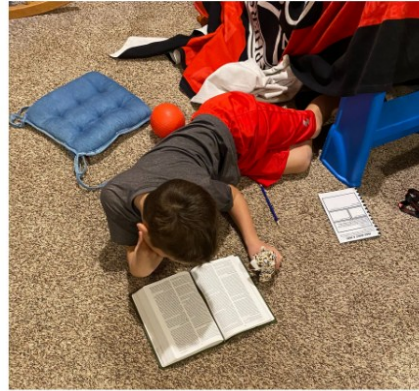
BIBLE BUDDIES

During on January Kingdom Families each child received a Bible Buddy along with a reading plan for the month of January. Bible Buddies encourage kids in Scripture reading as they "feed" their buddies with the Word of God! After they read their journals encourage them to think about what they read and how to apply to their life. Our next Kingdom Families is February 2. We meet in the Student Center during the CF hour!



WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
Wow! Jesus has the power to heal.	Wow! Jesus has the power to calm our fears.	Wow! Jesus has the power to provide.	Wow! Jesus has the power to save.

"In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all."
1 Chronicles 29:12b (NIV)



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@csidecov.org

FEBRUARY

- 2 | Kingdom Families K-5 Families | 9:45 AM | Student Center
- 2 | Kids Town for preschool only
- 5, 12, 19, 26 | Kids Life | Ages 4 - 5th Grade | 6:15 PM
- 9, 16, 23 | Kids Town | Ages 2 - 5th Grade | 9:45 AM



Moms Group

WE'RE BETTER TOGETHER

MOMS Group will meet on **February 11 & 25 @ 9:00 a.m.** We hope you'll come and enjoy a brunch, find encouragement and friendships! Childcare provided for children birth-5 years old. Contact Lizzy Butterfield, (785) 477-3319, or Allie Diederich, (785) 212-1447 for details.

Night to Shine

TIM TEBOW FOUNDATION

Night to Shine is an unforgettable worldwide celebration event, centered on God's love, honoring and valuing people with special needs.

Night to Shine requires the help of thousands of volunteers across the globe and is a wonderful way to connect with and serve your community of people with special needs! From serving as a guest's buddy or member of the red carpet paparazzi, to keeping the enthusiasm up on the dance floor or serving food, there is something for everyone.

Journey Mennonite Church will be hosting for McPherson County. To volunteer at Night to Shine, register at <https://mcpherson.journeymennonite.org/nighttoshine/>

Or call Journey Church, 620-504-6444. (They do require that you have a background check, so if you have volunteered in Children's Ministry here at Countryside, let us know and we can send you a copy.) Once registered, Journey will provide you with the necessary information and training you will need to serve at Night to Shine on Friday, February 7, 2025.

Church Life Update

Dedications:

Declan Reid, son of Lee & Hayley Froese
 Jace Charles, son of Josh & Isabelle Kahler
 Constance Mae and Hoover Lane, daughter
 and son of Patrick & Katie Selzer
 Parker Alan, son of Nolan & Joanna Trapp

Marriage:

Molly Black & Talon Wade, January 18

Death:

Alice Miller, January 15



Sew & Share, Monday, February 17, 9:00 a.m. We will gather to sew projects and have fellowship together! We will meet in **Room 5**. Feel free to come and go as you wish. Contact Shirlee Harper, 620-755-1205 with any questions.



Thank You's

Thank you for all the prayers, texts, calls, and cards for Ruby while she was sick. We felt God's presence through the whole ordeal and I know your prayers helped. It is comforting to know so many care about our kiddos alongside us. Y'all are a wonderful village to have! Ruby especially loved the cards that came in the mail. Thanks to those who took the time to make and write them for her.

Thanks, Aleasha Allen

Church Family,

Thank you so much for your card and expression of sympathy after my mom's passing. Our hearts have been heavy this holiday season, but we have cherished memories of her. Thanks be to God that He has given us peace and hope that she is with Jesus and other loved ones.

Sincerely, Adam North and family



From my heart, I am deeply grateful for the incredible generosity I've seen from our family of supporters. I wish you could know the difference you make every day in the lives of our clients who are touched by your kindness. Our total visits for 2024: 156 pregnancy tests, 74 ultrasounds, 91 STI testing, 52 prenatal program, 23 Dr. Dad, 246 parenting classes & education, 23 mobile unit, and 4 abortion minded women chose life! We had \$584,567.64 total funds raised for the year! I am positive in the year ahead we will continue to see lives restored, hearts healed, and families strengthened. We are praising God for what He has done through you! Thank you for the foundation you continue to build on, the foundation of Christ's love.

In gratitude, Kristi Busatti, Executive Director

BRUSH UP MAC

April 19, 2025

Brush Up Mac helps the elderly, the disabled, and low-income homeowners with projects such as yard work, minor home repairs and debris removal.

They are currently seeking donations, volunteers, and most importantly, homeowners who need their help.

Homeowner and volunteer applications may be picked up at Countryside's Information Center, McPherson Chamber of Commerce, Council on Aging, or at the McPherson Senior Center.

Return applications to the McPherson Housing Coalition, 1826 14th Avenue, McPherson, by **March 15th**. Questions? Call Chris Goodson, 620-241-7828 x 11.



COUNTRYSIDE'S CANCELLATION POLICY: It is that Countryside Covenant Church follows the decisions of USD 418 regarding inclement weather made during the school week. If schools are cancelled in McPherson due to snow or other weather conditions, activities are not held at Countryside Covenant Church. If inclement weather happens on a Saturday or Sunday, the leadership of Countryside will make a decision regarding cancellation of services. Cancellation notices are posted on 96.7 KMPK Radio, 98.9 KMPC Radio, adastra.com, as well as the church's Facebook page, @csidecov and website www.csidecov.com.



LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATE

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 rivers in the desert.
Isaiah 43:19

What springs forth from God’s work for us looks like an impossible situation at the end of this verse. Making a way or a road in the wilderness isn’t something any one of us would like to do on our own. Sure, we can hack away at the brush and trudge our way through, maybe even bull dozing down trees and some obstacles in our path and eventually make a way. But us trying to make our own way never works out for our best.

His work making a way for me, in the sensing of His new work by His Spirit in me, is the way I much prefer. All I know to do is seek Him, seek His face, seek to know His will that when the new springs up or forth, I am in step with my Jesus.

New things are available and going on here at Countryside Covenant Church and in our country. We have new Leadership Team members, and a new Chairman and Financial Officer and new Christian Formation classes and Bible studies available. And, we have a new President, Donald Trump, in which we hear will bring many changes to our country, with God. The new year sparks us to seek God more and His vision for our church and our lives.

We are thankful to Mark Wurm for serving the last two years as Chairman and Gunner Whorton serving as Financial Officer for the past six years. Both have served on our Leadership Team for the past six years. We are grateful to have had them on our Leadership Team. Their hearts for the Lord have been very evident in their serving, with diligence, integrity and humility. Thanks again to Mark and Gunner!!

Faith Funds continue to be a blessing to us and others. As we were able to give to Eaton Fire Relief Fund Clergy Community Coalition

through Pasadena Covenant Church to help with relief for three Covenant churches with 16 households of congregants having been destroyed.

The Dwelling Place – New Jerusalem Missions (Homeless Shelter) in Newton, where our own Sarah Goering is serving. As they are trying to open a home for women in recovery with their children.

Step MC’s new ministry to McPherson inmates “Getting Ahead While Just Getting Out” curriculum. And, to McPherson High School for students in need.

Can you sense the Holy Spirit nudging you, drawing you to a new place in life? Do you see an impossible obstacle in the way of your new beginning? Remember that God is able to bring your new beginning to life. Step out in faith. He is for you.

Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.
Ephesians 3:20

Reba Becker, Church Chair



January 2025 Attendance (includes online)		
	Christian Formation	Worship
January 5	Snow day, online only	171
January 12	178	553
January 19	147	492
January 26	155	631
January 2025 Giving		
January 5		\$6,953.86
January 12		\$25,837.02
January 19		\$40,330.80
January 26		\$20,028.27
Total Y-to-D		\$93,549.95
Giving vs Expenses Y-to-D		\$5,906.32

Countryside Covenant Church
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 McPherson KS 67460

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Your February 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, 9:45 a.m.



FEBRUARY EVENTS (see enclosed calendar for full list of events)

- 2 Kingdom Families
- 4 Widows Connection @ The Cedars
- 4, 11, 18, 25 Men's Coffee
- 4, 11, 18, 25 Celebrate Recovery
- 5, 12, 19, 26 Time of Prayer
- 8 All Student Worship Night
- 11, 25 MOMs Group
- 14-16 Marriage Retreat @ Covenant Cedars
- 15 Widows Fun Day, Café
- 16, 23 Next Step Class
- 17 Sew & Share
- 18 Staff & Leadership Team Retreat
- 18 Leadership Team Meeting



Countryside Staff

- Pastor Jon Black, Senior Pastor
- Pastor Jeremy Bower, Associate Pastor
- Pastor Lynn Black, Director of Adult Ministries
- Amy Brunk, Director of Children's Ministries
- Connor Gibson, Worship Arts Director
- Lizy Johnson, Director of Student Ministries
- Linda Totman, Church Administrator
- Kim Goering, Office Assistant
- Tiffani Eilrich, Children's Ministries Assistant
- Keragan Gates, Production Director