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 12
December 2025

THE PULSE OF COUNTRYSIDE

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

The Light of the World — *Pastor Jon Black*

Have you ever experienced pitch black darkness; the kind of darkness where you cannot see your hand in front of your face? If you have, did you experience a surge of panic and immediately search for even the slightest hint of light to alleviate your fear?

We can experience fear and panic when we encounter dark and scary events in our lives. We instinctively cry out to God for even the slightest hint of His presence and hope to comfort our fear.

The prophet Isaiah spoke about a light coming into the darkness;

> *The people who walked in darkness*
> *have seen a great light;*
> *those who dwelt in a land of*
> *deep darkness,*
> *on them has light shone. Isaiah 9:2*

When Simeon took the newborn Jesus in his arms, he praised God saying;

> *For my eyes have seen your salvation,*
> *31 which you have prepared in the*
> *sight of all nations: 32 a light for*
> *revelation to the Gentiles, and the*
> *glory of your people Israel."*
> *Luke 2:30*

Later, Jesus made this proclamation – *I am the light of the world.*

Satan understands that we will instinctively search for the light of God when we encounter fear and darkness. Therefore, he utilizes a strategy of deception and distraction by *masquerading as an angel of light. 2 Cor. 11:14*

Satan disguises himself knowing that if he appears as he truly is, (in darkness and fear), we will run straight into the arms of God.

If we are out in the countryside and look up at night, we can appreciate the glory of God's heavenly creation. The stars, the constellations, the recent northern lights, will fill us with a sense of awe and praise for our Creator.

But when we return to the bright lights of the city, we will no longer be able to detect the real thing. Satan's strategy is to blind and distract us from the only eternal source of Light by serving up a myriad of artificial lights.

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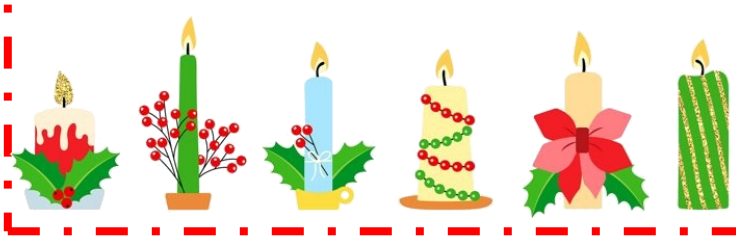
"The Light of the World"

He and his minions falsely promise us success, happiness, and prosperity through what this world offers. But they will ultimately fail us and will result in our demise if we make them our primary pursuits.

We celebrate Jesus coming to us at Christmas time. He is the only source of true Light that will lead to life, now and everlasting. Jesus is the Light of the world.

What source of light are you making your primary pursuit in life?



Widows' Connection Christmas Party

Saturday, December 6,

9:30am - Noon,

The Cedars Banquet Room.

We will have the gift game you all like so much. Please bring a wrapped $5.00 or less gift with you for that game. Lots of fun and surprises are planned, you won't want to miss it!

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

Christmas Season Schedule

- **December 3, 7:00 p.m.— Cloverton Christmas Concert**
- **December 4, 10, 11, 17, 18, 6:00 p.m. — Christmas Choir Practice**
- **December 6, 9:30 a.m. — Widows Connection Christmas Party**
- **December 10 — Youth Group Christmas Parties**
- **December 14, 5:30 p.m. — Carols & Cocoa Christmas Event**
- **December 21, 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. — Christmas Choir Program**
- **December 24, 5:30 & 7:30 p.m. — Christmas Eve Candlelight Services**
- **December 25 — Merry Christmas! Office Closed**
- **December 26 — Office Closed**
- **December 31 — Celebrate Recovery's New Year's Eve Party**

December NEWSLETTER

What a FULL Month!

November has come and gone in a FLASH! The Middle School had their Fall Party, while the High School cut a rug during our Annual Fall Barn Party!

We also had the Middle School and High School Fall Retreats up at the cozy Covenant Cedars Bible Camp!

And let's not forget our 1st Annual Turkey Trot here at Countryside!

The last week of November, our students participated in service projects during the youth group hour. Middle Schoolers made "survival goodie bags" for their teachers and the High School students travelled around to all the McPherson Blessing Boxes and restocked and prayed over them!

We also had an incredible turnout for this year's Fields of Faith, hosted by FCA! My heart is so full of encouragement and joy seeing the way our Lord is working in the lives of these young people! Cannot wait to see how they grow in 2026!

Upcoming Events

- Wednesday, Dec 3rd, Cloverton Concert!
- Wednesday, Dec 10th, Youth Group Christmas Parties! 6:15 & 8pm
- Sunday, Dec 14th, Caroling & Cocoa, 5:30pm
- Wednesday, Dec 17th, 24th & 31st , NO Youth Group!
- Sunday, Dec 28th & Jan 4th, No Christian Formation!
- Wednesday, Jan 7th, Countryside Family Game Night!

Contact Info

Email: lizy@csidecov.org
Phone: (785)317-9384

Countryside Kids

KIDS TOWN (SUNDAYS)

- Dec 7 | Kingdom Families
  - We will still have Kids Town for preschoolers, but all K-5 kids and parents will meet in the Student Center for a time of fellowship and a lesson on Mary and Joseph
- Dec 14 | Jesus was Born
- Dec 21 | Simeon and Anna
- Dec 28| No Kids Town

DECEMBER GATHER MOMS GROUPS

- Our Wednesday evening group will not be meeting the months of December or January due to other church activities happening.
- Dec 13 | Gather Moms @ 9:30 a.m. | Room 6
  - Moms of middle school and high school kids!
  - Topic: Moms, Let's Talk: Conversations We Must Have With Our Kids

ANNUAL CAROLING EVENT

Save the date for our annual *Christmas Caroling Event!* We will meet at the church at 5:30 p.m. and then depart to caroling locations. We will return to the church for soup, cocoa, and cookies! We will have the trolley again this year!

COUNTRYSIDE KIDS CALENDAR

December

3	Wednesday	Cloverton Concert
7	Sunday	Kingdom Families (K-5 Parents & Kids)
		Kids Town (preschool only) | 9:45-10:45 AM
10	Wednesday	K-5th Choir Practice | 6:00 PM
14	Sunday	Kids Town | 9:45-10:45 AM
		Caroling & Cocoa | 5:30 PM
17	Wednesday	K-5th Choir Practice | 6:00 PM
21	Sunday	Kids Town | 9:45-10:45 AM
		Multi-Generational Choir | Both Services
24	Wednesday	Christmas Eve Services
28	Sunday	No Kids Town

CONTACT US

Feel free to contact us with any questions about our programming, events, or milestone celebrations (such as baby dedication and baptism).

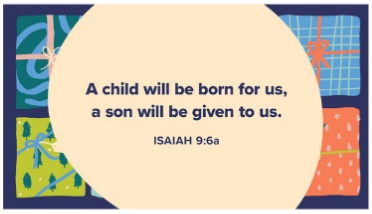
Amy Brunk, Director of Children's Ministries amy@csidecov.org
Tiffani Eilrich, Children's Ministry Assistant: tiffani@csidecov.org

KIDS LIFE (WEDNESDAYS)

Just a reminder that Kids Life will not during the month of December. We will resume Kids Life on January 14th!

KIDS PRAISE | SUNDAYS DURING SERVICE (AGES 4 - 3RD GRADE)

Our theme in December is *Best Gift Ever*, and we are teaching kids the Simple Truth "I Am Never Alone." Kids will learn that God gives us strength, God gives us joy, God gives us salvation, and God gives us hope.



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

This year, children in K-5th grade will be invited to join a multi-generational choir on December 21st to lead worship as part of our children's program. Our 3 and 4 year old preschool class will be learning some songs as well to sing separately that morning. Check the schedule for K-5 practices. Preschoolers will practice during Kids Town on Sunday mornings so do not need to attend the Wednesday evening practices.

KINGDOM FAMILIES | DECEMBER 7TH

Kingdom Families is for families of K-5 children during the CF hour on the first Sunday of the month. We share a light breakfast together and a short lesson with an activity. This month, families will be going home with a special ornament for your Christmas tree along with an Advent devotional.

CF CLASS STARTING IN JANUARY

Please check out the adult classes starting in January on Sunday mornings for CF. A new class will be offered that will focus on technology use and families.

COUNTRYSIDE KIDS WEEKLY UPDATES

Use the QR code to the right to subscribe to our weekly emails that go out! We use these emails to share the latest updates with you along with links to sign up for different activities and serving opportunities.

RIGHTNOW MEDIA

We are so excited that everyone at Countryside now has access to RightNow Media! There are so many great resources available to you and your families now! If you haven't already, use the QR code to create your account for free.

When Hope Walks Through the Door

A Christmas Reflection from McPherson Housing Coalition

Every December, we retell the story of a Savior who arrived quietly, in a small and unexpected place, yet changed the world forever. And every year, as we watch lives transform through the work of MHC, we are reminded that God still enters the ordinary—one person, one home, one act of compassion at a time. *"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it"* (John 1:5).

This year, we watched hope walk through many doors.

We saw it in the mother who cried as she tucked her children into beds of their own for the first time. We saw it in the senior who said, "I didn't think anyone remembered me anymore," after Brush Up MAC repaired her steps and made her home safe again. We saw it in the residents of Oak Harbor Cottages who began to believe that stability and dignity were not dreams—they were gifts meant for them too.

And we saw it as Sutherland Estates grew from an idea into a place where families are building new beginnings.

Each of these moments is its own Christmas story—God showing up where new beginnings were needed, where hope was waiting to rise, where people were ready for a fresh start. Through your prayers, your giving, and your willingness to love your neighbor, you helped write those stories. *"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"* (Matthew 6:21).

You helped make room at the inn.

This Christmas, as your family gathers to celebrate the birth of Christ, please know that the light of that night still shines—through repaired homes, restored dignity, and renewed hope across McPherson County. Lives have been changed because you chose to care.

From all of us at McPherson Housing Coalition: Thank you for carrying Christ's light into the lives of those who needed it most.

May His peace fill your homes and may His love guide us into another year of changing lives together.

Merry Christmas!

Chris Goodson

Thank You's

Dear Friends,
Thank you for your faithful, continued prayer and financial support. We especially thank you for your extra help of $1,000. We look forward to returning to Congo in just about a month. We would appreciate prayers for us as we move back to Congo and begin working with our ministry partners.
Love & thanks, Paul & Sheryl Noren

C-Side Cov,
Thank you so much for letting us have the Worship Arts Festival at your (our) amazing church this month. We had 60 kids and 9 bands represented. What a blessing to pour into the next generation of worship leaders. God Bless, Jacob Kaufman (W.A. Festival Director)

Thank you to everyone who helped serve and provided food for the Sue Hervey funeral lunch. It was very much appreciated!

Church Life Update

Death:
Sue Hervey, November 5

Dedications:
Genevieve & Sylvie, daughters of Levi & Kayla Sides

Marriage:
MaryAnn Wurm & Jake Strawn, November 8

White Rose:
Silas Allen

New Christian Formation Classes for ALL ages Begins on Sunday, January 11 at 9:45 a.m.

⇒ **Immerse Prophets, Room 12:** is the fourth of six volumes of the Immerse: The Bible Reading Experience program. Prophets presents the First Testament prophets in groupings that represent four historical periods, beginning with the prophets who spoke before the fall of Israel's northern kingdom (Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah), then before the fall of the southern kingdom (Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk), around the time of Jerusalem's destruction (Jeremiah, Obadiah, Ezekiel), and after the return from exile (Haggai, Zechariah, Joel, Malachi). Bobbie Kaufman & Jerry Rogers, facilitators.

⇒ **RVL Biblical Discipleship, Room 13:** Join us to review the origin and biblical history of discipleship in the days of and leading up to Jesus. This semester is the finale to the discipleship study series that presents teachings and insight of renown teacher Ray Vander Laan (RVL). We'll examine how discipleship was embedded in Jewish culture and who Jesus is as our Rabbi. Josse Allen, facilitator.

⇒ **Marriage: Lessons for Family Relations, Room 15:** We'll be studying 'Lessons for Family Relations' by PC Mathew, a video course focusing on family relationships, those we can choose and those we don't choose. Shared class facilitators are Vetters, Harpers, Goldsmiths and Czosnowskis.

⇒ **Women of the Word, Room 19:** We will start our study at the end of the Gospels with Judas' betrayal. Then we'll study, Acts, James, Galatians, Thessalonians and Corinthians. LaJane Anderson, facilitator.

⇒ **Restless Families: Revealing the stronghold that technology has on our families and finding freedom by reclaiming our minds for transformation into Christlikeness, Room 16/18:** This class will equip families with a biblical and theological perspective on humanity and how that impacts the way we interact and respond to technology. Theologically, we will explore the imago dei and be reminded that we were created for communion. We will then reflect on how the effects of the fall impact us and how sin corrupts technology and how technology is shaping our minds and relationships. We will have discussion on how we can push back against the powers that desire to divide us and cause us to look everywhere but Christ for our identity. We will also be giving recommendations for boundaries around smartphones and screen time. Amy Brunk, facilitator.

⇒ **Kingdom Families, Student Center:** Meets December 7, then resumes February 1. Once a month combined class **for children ages kindergarten – 5th grade and their parents/grandparents.** This will be a time for families to engage in a monthly lesson together and be introduced to a new family discipleship practice for the month! There will be no Kids Town for Kindergarten – 5th grade on these Sundays. Adults will skip their regular class.

Women's Ministry

After several years of serving as the coordinator of Women's Ministry here at Countryside, I have stepped down from this volunteer position. And I have been and am truly blessed by this opportunity to connect women to each other an to Jesus. Please pray with me for the ministry and for the Leadership Team and staff as they discern what's next for women's ministry. A special thank you to those who have served with me on the ministry team most recently: Lizzy Butterfield, Laura Dailey, Kristine Lambertus, Crissy McCarthy, Val Mork, Emily Power, and Joanna Trapp.

-Linda Totman

Leadership Team UPDATE

Rather than leave us hopelessly trapped in the negative feedback loop of self-glorifying idolatry, God sent us His glory. No longer in a tent in the wilderness or in a building in Jerusalem but wrapped in flesh, the flesh of His one and only Son, Jesus of Nazareth. The word here for "dwelt" among us is in the same word family as the Old Testament word for *tabernacle*, the traveling tent of God's presence made by Moses before the temple was built by Solomon. When we turned away from God's glory for death-inducing idol worship, at the appointed time, God turned toward us. He mediated His glory through the life and ministry of Jesus. When God appeared to His people in the old covenant, access was extremely limited. After Moses, only the high priest could go all the way into God's presence, and He could only do so once a year. But Jesus is the new and better tabernacle, the new and better temple.

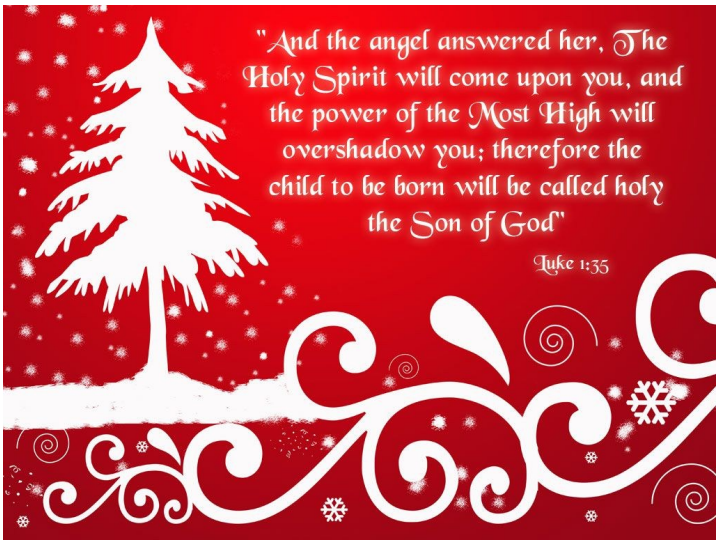
In John 1:18, John says that Jesus is *"the one and only Son, who is himself God and is at the Father's side – he has revealed him."* Jesus can mediate God's glorious presence to us because He is both God and man. The temple was meant to be the place where Heaven and earth met and where God's people had accessed His forgiving and life-giving presence, but they could only go through the mediator of a priest.

Jesus's ministry is much better than the temple or the priesthood. In Jesus, we can come directly to God, to both give Him glory and receive the blessing of His glorious presence. Notice what Paul says in Romans 5: 1-2, *"Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We have also obtained access through Him by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we boast in the hope of the glory of God."*

When we put our faith and trust in Jesus's death and resurrection as the payment for and victory over sin, death, and evil, we are justified; declared not guilty. We are freed from the trap of self-glorifying idolatry. With new hearts empowered by the Holy Spirit, we have a new life set on a new trajectory: the hope of God's glory. The hope that God will reveal His glory in and through us in this age and the hope that in the age to come "…the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lords' glory, as the water covers the sea." -Habakkuk 2:14

For the Leadership Team,

Aaron Glendening



November 2025 Attendance (includes online)

	Christian Formation	Worship
November 2	241	616
November 9	169	599
November 16	182	639
November 23	60	584

November 2025 Giving

November 2	$42,773.30
November 9	$34,196.61
November 16	$23,156.11
November 23	$23,347.34
Total Y-to-D	$1,122,164.29
Giving vs Expenses Y-to-D	($91,259.46)

Countryside Covenant Church
PO Box 765, 940 E. Northview Ave.
McPherson KS 67460

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Your December 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. (No C.F. on Dec. 28 or Jan. 4)

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

2, 9, 16, 23,30	Men's Coffee
2, 9, 16, 23, 30	Celebrate Recovery
3, 10	Men's Book Study
3, 10, 17	Time of Prayer
3	Cloverton Concert
4, 10, 11, 17, 18	Christmas Choir Practice
6	Widows Connection Christmas Party
7	Kingdom Families
7	Ministry Coordination Council Meeting
10	Youth Group Christmas Parties
13	Gather Moms
14	Carols & Cocoa Christmas Event
21	Christmas Choir Program
24	Christmas Eve Candlelight Services
25 & 26	Christmas/Office Closed
31	Celebrate Recovery New Year's Eve Party

Countryside Staff

Pastor Jon Black, Senior Pastor

Pastor Jeremy Bower, Associate Pastor

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

Jase Brandt, Production Director