



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 23, ISSUE 4

April 2024

## Called to Others

– Pastor Jon Black

Recently we welcomed and celebrated with others when they chose to take the step of membership at Countryside Covenant Church.

Our Covenant membership materials offer five reasons for joining a local church. I will share three.

Joining a church conveys:

### 1. A Love for What Jesus Loves.

Joining a church is a public declaration of a spiritual truth; namely that Jesus loves His Church and is deeply committed to her (also known as the Body of Christ or the Bride of Christ).

How do you think your friend would feel if you were to inform him on his wedding day: *"I love you like a brother, but I don't care much for your bride?"*

I think he would feel the same way that Jesus feels when His children disregard His church.

**1 John 4:21** - *And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.*

### 2. A Commitment to Other Believers



When people are asked why they go to church, many respond by stating the many ways their church benefits their lives or the lives of their family. We need others for our spiritual growth. But others need us as well, and the unique spiritual gifts and abilities we have been given to serve them.

God gives us 39 different one-another commands in the New Testament for good reason.

**Rom 12:10** - *Be devoted to one another in love.*

When Lynn and I first rented an apartment, we took good care of it, but were not invested enough in it to make capital improvements. We understood that it was not our permanent residence.

When we eventually purchased a house, we committed ourselves to years of home improvements because we knew that we would remain there for years.

*-continued on page 2*

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

# THE PULSE OF COUNTRYSIDE



*-continued from page 1 "Called to Others"*

We became even more committed to caring for our home when the pipes busted or the sewer backed up, or the walls cracked, or weeds popped up in the yard. Why? Because we loved our home and we were invested in it.

The same can be said for church membership. We will be devoted to the specific body of believers to which we were committed.

### 3. A Love for the Unsaved

As believers, we are called to *go and make disciples of all nations* – Matt 28:19.

*We are called to be Christ's witnesses in Jerusalem (our communities), Judea, and Samaria (those who are unlike us), and to the ends of the earth - Acts 1:8.*

God sent His Son into the lost world to offer salvation to us. He now sends us to do the same as His hands and feet. We can accomplish much more together than separate.

How much would we accomplish if you were the **only person**.....

- to show up for our annual Trunk or Treat?
- to organize and offer VBS at church?
- to take care of the church building and property?
- to fund the missions and ministries of our church?

God would certainly bless you for your faithfulness as an individual. But how much more effective would we be if we were to each contribute with our gifts, talents, and resources to do the work?

I often run into people who tell me that their only church is on a podcast or television broadcast. We can certainly learn much from others' teachings. But we are called to so much more as members of Christ's Church, His body of believers. We are called to be givers. We are called to others.

*Moms Group*  
WE'RE BETTER TOGETHER

*MOMs Group has just three more meetings left this semester and you're invited to join them! April 9 & 23, and May 14 at 9:00 a.m. We hope you'll come and enjoy a brunch, find encouragement and friendships! Child-care provided for children birth – 5 years old. We also have a MOMs playdate scheduled for April 16 @ 9:30 a.m., location to be determined. Contact Aleasha Allen, (208) 240-2285, for more details!*



### Church Life Update

#### **Baptisms:**

**Kinsley Anderson, Nora Johnson, Tracy Morgan, Amelia Neff, Abigail Pruitt**



#### **Births:**

**Oliver George, son of Hadley & Katie Hageman, February 29**

**Parker Alan, son of Nolan & Joanna Trapp, March 25**

#### **New Members:**

**Uri & Kathy Miller, Teresa Pimentel, Heidi Wedel**

#### **Death:**

**Pat Johnson, March 14**



# Countryside Kids



## KIDS TOWN | SUNDAYS (AGES 2 - 4TH GRADE)

On a farm, life has a daily rhythm (for plants, animals, and people, too). "Life" is what this series is all about, because we're talking about Easter and Jesus' triumph over death! Together, we'll discover we can stick with Jesus even when our days are dark, and that because Jesus is alive, we can spend our days meeting with Him, trusting He's there for us, and sharing His love — not just today, but every day.

## VBS JUNE 3 - 7 | 9 AM - NOON

Kids will be challenged as they discover that God's truth never changes, everyone needs Jesus, and learn to speak the truth in love. Adventure awaits each day as kids explore tide pools, spot orcas, fly kites, and watch the mighty waves crash up against the immovable Breaker Rock!

We are recruiting and training our VBS Team!

Below you will find some ways that you can serve at VBS. Contact Amy with questions or use the QR code to let me know what you're interested in!

## BIBLE STUDY TEACHERS

CRAFT HELPERS

MISSIONS LEADER

DRAMA

MUSIC

RECREATION

DECORATING

## LUNCH COORDINATOR

LUNCH HELPERS

CRAFT LEADER

SMALL GROUP LEADERS

NURSERY

HOSPITALITY TEAM

COURTESY TEAM

**USE THE QR CODE BELOW TO REGISTER YOUR CHILD  
OR TO VOLUNTEER FOR VBS 2024**



## KINGDOM FAMILIES

### STUDENT CENTER

**APRIL 7TH | 9:45 AM**

*Kingdom Families meets the first Sunday of the month! Families with children K-6th grade meet in the Student Center.*

This will be our last month of Kingdom Families for the school year. We will complete our discussion on the book, *Family Discipleship*.



## COVENANT CEDARS BIBLE CAMP | SUMMER 2024

This camp is open to children entering 1st - 6th grade! Contact Amy if you are wanting to use Camp Bucks for your deposit or for scholarship information.

## CALENDAR @ A GLANCE

### APRIL

7 | Kingdom Families | 9:45 AM | Student Center  
17 | Last night of Kids Life / 5th Grade Preview Night  
20 | VBS Workday | 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM  
28 | Last Sunday of Kids Town



## “Connecting women to each other and to Jesus!”

Each month the Women's Ministry team carries out their mission statement through various opportunities for the women who are a part of the church family at Countryside. And currently, we are a group of nine women who have a deep passion for each of you and therefore we organize Bible studies, events, and service opportunities designed to promote spiritual growth. Just like the dynamics of a family, we love to get together and experience fun, laughter, learning, conversations, and ways to encourage one another.

During February and March, we held “brainstorming” sessions with several women to hear their hearts regarding what they would like women's ministry to possibly offer. Sometimes, we all get in a rut ... whether it's what we wear, what we cook, what we read ... you get the idea. And, in a sense, that's where the team finds itself. We continue to want feedback to stretch us and to help others. One of our desires is to see women of all ages and stages of life connecting with others. One question we asked was how we can connect the older and younger generations. And lastly what kind of events do you think women want or expect us to provide for them. We heard some pretty neat answers to those questions and so you'll be seeing additional events and opportunities added to the church calendar. One thing that we heard over and over again is the need for fellowship and relationships. God made us for just that ... fellowship and relationships, so we hope you will be able to join us on several occasions. If you have ideas that you would like to share with me, please do so! My door is always open, and I think I'm a pretty good listener. Let's make a date!!

One event that is being planned for April is **A Woman's Night of Prayer on Monday, the 29th**. Plans are to meet in the Student Center at 7 pm where there will be different stations for each of us to participate in – some with interaction and some with times of reflection. I'm sure it will be an evening that encourages you and your prayer life.

I know it's hard to sometimes walk into an event not knowing who will be there or what you might even find there, but I can assure you that you'll be glad you did. We are just a bunch of women who desire to spend time with others or possibly meet a new friend. Even though my walk with Jesus started many years ago, I am still learning and growing and my involvement in women's ministry has been the catalyst for that growth. Here's what I just read on my perpetual calendar ...

*God has great plans for you. He has important things He wants you to do. And He is preparing you for your destiny right now. But you have to take steps of obedience in order to get there. And you have to trust that He knows the way and won't hurt you in the process.*

I believe that pertains to me and you too!

Believing Him,  
Linda



## 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 29th at 9:00 a.m. in Room 5.** It's a great way to serve and to help others.







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

### Crescendo Upcoming Events:



**Apr. 29, 9am - 3pm.** Chase Lake Falls Hike and Lunch at The Grand Hotel in Cottonwood Falls. *RSVP to church office by Apr. 22.* Enjoy a morning outdoors and lunch together at The Grand Hotel. Hiking is easy to moderate and weather permitting; lunch @ \$15.00.



**May 4,** McPherson Annual Antique Car Show. View **documentary "Path to Pebble Beach"** that highlights the car we viewed on tour last year. *Reservations, times, tours on your own.*



**May 21, Noon - 2:00pm.** Annual Covenant Crescendo National Webinar, "Community- Navigating Transitions." The Bible offers us a roadmap for growing older, but

those who age recognize that growing older is not for sissies! Get a heads up on how to navigate together the potholes, detours, and difficulties of aging. Organized watch party if ten RSVP to Lynn Black. *Registration link to be sent out in e-letter in May for you to view on your own.*



**Sundays in June 9:45 - 10:45am.**

"Cinnamon Rolls and Surveys" Stay after church or come early. Answer three brief questions which help determine

the direction of Crescendo Ministry while you enjoy coffee and a cinnamon roll in the Countryside Café. Enjoy connection with our Crescendo leadership team and one another as we dream about how God might direct our ministry. Make your voice heard.



**June 3-7, Help with Vacation Bible School.** All talents and skill levels needed to foster connection with the youngest among us!

**Crescendo will coordinate two groups** for either teaching or serving. **Teach** with a team of actors, teachers, and helpers. OR, **serve** on a team by building sets/painting on our **Work Day Apr. 20,** or **serve** by shopping/cooking lunch during

VBS week. *Ask Lynn Black or Amy Brunk for details and to sign up.*



**June 20, 8am - 1pm,** Trip to the **Wichita Botanical Garden.** Join us for an early morning walk in the beauty of God's creation in the cool of the day. Choose to either visit with friends or pray as you walk with a prayer guide. Reflect on your experience as a group at the new "Want Bierock and Coffee Company" afterward. Carpool. (\$8 garden)



**July 13, 4:30pm,** Countryside Gym "Crescendo Indoor Picnic." Come join our romp! Stay cool, share a meal, laugh together. Hear results from our surveys and find out how God intends to knit us together in the coming year. Age well. Live better. Disciple the next generation.



**Aug. 10, 9am - 4pm,** Crescendo Leaders Planning Retreat

**Sept. 21, 4:00pm,** Annual Picnic at Peterson's Cabin

### **This Fall...**

**Faith Friends.** Consider partnering with a confirmation student by praying for them this next school year. Matches and initial meetings will be facilitated by our student ministries director and Lynn Black. This past year's group has thoroughly enjoyed their times together. Now that we've piloted the experience, let's all commit to a young person's growth through "Faith Friends." Pray for them, occasionally attend their school events, follow up, touch base on Sundays. Discipleship starts here.

*See "Upcoming Events-Clip and Save" on next page*





### McPherson Housing Coalition

The saying "April showers bring May flowers" has been around for a long time. To me, it symbolizes the harvest that comes after hard work and perseverance. I have witnessed this unfold in many different ways. First, through the hard work of volunteers and donors who show up time after time to help with our many projects; Brush Up Mac, Oak Harbor Cottages, McPherson County Housing Conference, and so much more. Their dedication has assisted single parents and allowed seniors to stay in their homes. They have provided a safe haven which has allowed families to heal and feel loved. Finally, it gives me so much hope when I walk through the tiny homes, watch a group of students pick up leaves for a 90-year-old widow, or when state and federal agencies come to our communities and are amazed by our faith community. Following God's lead, we have brought the rain for a bountiful harvest.

Testimony: "I was lost and alone, spiritually and emotionally broken, with little hope. I had nowhere to go and no one to turn to when I found MHC and the Oak Harbor Cottages. Together, we worked on a plan to help me rebuild my life. They assisted me through my complex challenges and helped me see that someone genuinely loved me and wanted the best for me and my son. Although I had to make some hard choices, they assured me they would not let me fall and that I could become independent, move forward, and succeed. Today, I am independent, feel loved and supported, and I thank God every day for these faithful people who care so deeply for others."

#### **Construction updates:**

##### Oak Harbor Cottages:

- ⇒ 1 home waiting on the minor interior finish
- ⇒ Sign installed
- ⇒ Bridges installed



##### Sutherland Estates:

- ⇒ 3 homes' interior finish started
- ⇒ 2 homes framed with windows, plumbing, and electrical under-way
- ⇒ 1 foundation poured



#### **Film Your Faith**

Unfortunately, our video did not make the top ten, but we are still excited to share it. Keep an eye on our social media handles, as we will share after adding a few finishing touches. We sincerely appreciate your support, and we hope this video will encourage you to spread your faith to those who need to feel God's love."

March was a big month for MHC as we shared the Oak Harbor Cottages Story with our state and federal legislators. Our goal is not to draw attention to ourselves but to bring attention to the struggling families and our work to help them. We ask for your continued prayers so that everything we do glorifies God.

#### **Important Dates 2024**

- ⇒ **April 20**, Brush Up Mac
- ⇒ **September 26**, McPherson County Housing Conference

**Isaiah 30:23-24 "Whenever you plant your crops, the Lord will send rain to make them grow and will give you a rich harvest, and your livestock will have plenty of pasture."**

Blessings, Chris Goodson



### **Crescendo Upcoming Events – Clip and Save!!**

- **Apr. 29**, 9am to 3pm Chase Lake Falls Hike and Lunch at The Grand Hotel, *RSVP to church office*
- **May 4**, McPherson College Antique Car Show. View documentary "Path to Pebble Beach"
- **May 21, Noon to 2:00pm** Annual Covenant Crescendo National Webinar, "Community-Navigating Transitions." *Registration link to be sent out in e-letter in May.*
- **Sundays in June, 9:45 to 10:45am** "Cinnamon Rolls and Surveys" *Countryside Cafe*
- **June 3-7** Help with VBS (*Ask Lynn Black or Amy Brunk NOW!*)
- **June 20, 8am**, Trip to Wichita Botanical Garden and Want Bierock and Coffee Company
- **July 13, 4:30pm** Gym "Crescendo Indoor Picnic"
- **Aug. 10, 9am to 4pm** Crescendo Leaders Planning Retreat
- **Sept. 21, 4:00pm** Crescendo Annual Picnic at Peterson's Cabin





## LIFE STUDENT MINISTRIES

### April Youth Schedule:

- 3** | 6:15-7:45 pm Middle School Youth Group  
8-9:30 pm High School Youth Group
- 10** | 6:15 -7:45 pm Middle School Youth Group  
8-9:30 pm High School Youth Group
- 17** | 5:30 pm | 5<sup>th</sup> grade preview night & pizza party with Kelly  
(5<sup>th</sup> grade stays for MS youth group)  
6:15 -7:45 pm Middle School Youth Group  
8-9:30 pm High School Youth Group
- 24** | Senior Night & 8<sup>th</sup> grade preview night  
6:15 -7:45 pm Middle School Youth Group  
8-9:30 pm High School Youth Group
- 29** | 6pm LSM Leaders Night Out

#### Looking Ahead in May:

#### No Youth Group in May

- 1** | 8-9 pm High School End of Year party
- 5** | Confirmation Sunday
- 19** | Senior Sunday



Unite (formerly known as CHIC) is a denominational-wide event where Covenant youth gather to Unite around God's purposes. All Covenant churches across North America and beyond are invited to encourage and equip high school students for God's glory and neighbor's good. The event will be hosted at two separate locations. The Midwest Conference we are part of has been assigned to go west to San Diego, held at San Diego State University, July 15-19, 2024. This event is for incoming freshmen (those who will complete 8th grade by the summer of 2024) through outgoing seniors (class of 2024)! Registration is complete for this event as final details are in progress.

**A HUGE thank you to those who supported students attending Unite at our pancake feed on Easter Sunday! We are consistently overwhelmed by the outpouring of the love and support of Countryside!**



**Registration is open for Summer Camp at Covenant Cedars! Register through their website at [Cedars.org](https://cedars.org).**

**Watch For Upcoming Events:** Please refer to the church website and church app under Student Ministries to stay informed on upcoming events. You can also follow us @Lifestumin on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for announcements.



At LSM, we desire for each student to Rise-Up and live into the call of 1 Timothy 4:12 "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, conduct, in love, un-faith, and in purity."



Thank you to our guest speaker, Logan Schrag, for sharing his story in youth group! Logan, who is a financial advisor for People's Bank & Trust, will be teaching a High School Christian Formation class in April on Faith & Finances!

*A special "thank you" to Mallory Roberts for covering one of our worship teams in March!*

#### CHURCH APP



#### M.S. APP



Lifestumin M.S Youth Group  
Scan this QR code and join!

#### H.S. APP



Life Student Ministry H.S Youth Group  
Scan this QR code and join!



The **Men's Softball Team** is recruiting players for this up-coming season. If you are interested in playing, be sure to sign up at the Information

Center. Registrations are due in the middle of April. If you have questions, please call Aaron Roberts at 620.755.4506.



### Widows Connection

Tuesday, April 2,  
9:30 a.m. @ The Cedars  
Wellness Center.

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

Saturday, April 20, 11:30 a.m.,  
Countryside Café

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

### VBS Work Day

Saturday, April 20, 9:00am - 3:00 p.m.

We'll be painting and working on decorations. It will be a come and go day, so you can stay the whole time or work just an hour or two. To start the day off, everyone's invited to a breakfast at First United Methodist Church at 8:00 a.m.

Come and help us get ready for VBS!



### Thank You's

Thank you so very much for the prayers, encouragement and meals for us during my knee replacement surgery and recovery.

Love, Evy Boese O'Dell

A special thanks to these ladies who helped clean the kitchen on Saturday, March 23: Deb Steel, Debra Spencer, Crissy Cooks, Linda Andersen, Emilie Schulz, Christine Koehn, Val Mork, Linda Totman, and Cindy Pressnall.

Women Ministries

Countryside Covenant Church,

Thank you for allowing my family to use your church for my sister's funeral (Cori Bennett). It is a beautiful church. May God bless your congregation and your mission.

Vicky Wagner

Dear Pastors, Prayer Team, and Church Family,

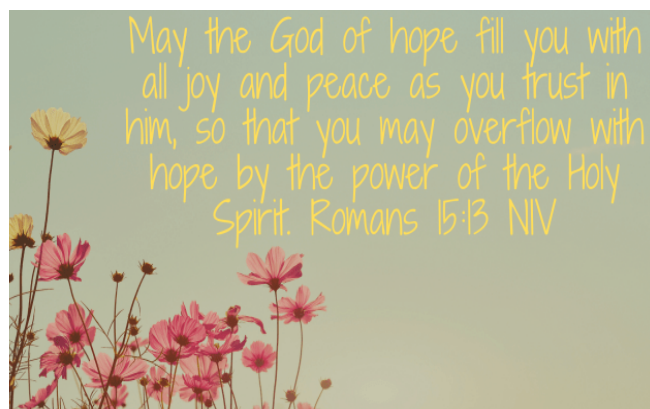
Puff and I just want to thank you all so much for all the prayers, meals, and support you gave us when Puff had an unplanned surgery. We thank God for all of you. God's blessings on this church. Thank you all!

Love in Christ, Debbie & Puff Dorf

Dear Countryside Family,

We wish we could thank each of you personally for the cards, calls, visits, prayers, words of encouragement and meals. Sharon did have surgery on her back at the end of January and during six months of preliminary treatment and finally the surgery, we have felt overwhelming love from our church family. Recovery will take awhile, but in the meantime we do appreciate the prayers. We feel so blessed. Thank you all!

Tom and Sharon Stinemetze





## LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATE

### March Leadership Team Meeting:

-As a follow up to my comments at the Annual Meeting, I report that Aaron Glendening in his work with FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes) will be moved from outreach to be under our Missions Team umbrella. This is not a dollar change, rather this comes after review in which our Missions Team recognizes that Aaron is committed to full time mission work just like our international partners, and like them he raises his own support and is making mission (service and outreach to others) his life's work. This is no change to our many years history of support, but this "re-listing" does make sense!

-Connor will be taking a six-week ministry renewal leave this fall, generally this will happen about when Pastor Jeremy returns from his leave. I have shared before that many of our staff have pastoral duties in their work at Countryside as shown in their "job description." Per church policy this leave is listed for pastors, but the Leadership Team discerned this is an appropriate use (this is not without precedent). Please support Connor, and other staff and praise team people as preparation is made. We are very blessed by our staff and by Connor; it is a privilege that we have resources and the ability to provide Connor with time for "spiritual, emotional and physical rest, study, prayer and vision casting." To God be the glory!

-I again affirm how blessed we are financially – thank you for your faithfulness. For a couple years now, including at present, our criteria of adequate funds on hand have meant that every month we allocate funds toward capital (think big building costs or projects) and also toward "faith funds" which we use to bless others and support unbudgeted kingdom needs or opportunities, typically outside of our church. For March we had a great discussion and as a result are intentionally entering into prayer as we consider each month how to use faith funds, and also, we will make it our practice to then pray that God will bless them for their intended purpose. During March's meeting, after spirited discussion and consideration, we were led to share some faith funds in a different way – realizing not always will people come to a building to be "churched," this distribution of faith funds goes to an intentional effort by FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes) to share Jesus by going to where area youth (and families) spend a great deal of time – ask me or another Leadership Team member and we will tell you about this!

### Mission Statement

-Alan Foresman, church consultant, met with our Leadership Team in February to discuss leadership team essentials, reflect on progress, and consider forging the future. Also in February, I benefited from a Midwest Conference zoom meeting for church leadership led by Aaron Hoffman, a Marine Corps veteran, and certified Group Facilitator. Aaron overviewed the value and use of a church mission statement, vision statement and values, and among topics Alan reviewed with our LT was the need for clarity. Next article, pending other LT news, I intend to write about our vision as we penned it in 2023 – "We exist to make and deepen disciples who make Jesus their top priority, obey His commands, and teach others to do the same."

-Last month I explored creeds, the most basic of which is "Jesus is Lord." I wrap up here with our mission statement from the past several years: **"We are a community growing in the grace and truth of Jesus Christ as we worship, disciple, serve and multiply."** It was over a dinner conversation last week that I realized I must not take for granted this identity of our church as a community that is ... "growing in the grace and truth of Jesus Christ." Let's continue to prayerfully seek God's will, and to grow in this posture of humility and service as we serve our risen Lord Jesus Christ, as we in community "grow in the grace and truth of Jesus Christ."

Mark Wurm, Church Chair



#### March 2024 Attendance (includes online)

	Christian Formation	Worship
March 3	215	609
March 10	142	534
March 17	158	578
March 24	192	677

#### March 2024 Giving

March 3	\$27,947.32
March 10	\$17,794.84
March 17	\$26,796.40
March 24	\$23,332.73
<b>Total Y-to-D</b>	<b>\$332,046.35</b>
<b>Giving vs Expenses Y-to-D</b>	<b>\$601.06</b>

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

Nonprofit  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT #23  
McPherson KS

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**

2, 20	Widows Connection
2, 9, 16, 23, 30	Men's Coffee
2, 9, 16, 23, 30	Celebrate Recovery
6, 13, 20, 27	Women's Coffee Connection
7	Kingdom Families, Student Center
9 & 23	MOMs Group
11	Choir Practice
12-13	Covenant Cedars Work Weekend
16	MOMs Playdate
16	Leadership Team Meeting
17	5th Grade Preview Night
20	Brush Up Mac
20	VBS Work Day
24	8th Grade Preview & Senior Night
28	Last Day of Christian Formation
29	Sew & Share
29	Lifestumin Leader's Night Out
29	A Woman's Night of Prayer

### **Countryside Staff**

Jon Black, Senior Pastor

Jeremy Bower, Associate Pastor

Lynn Black, Adult Ministries Director

Kelly Morrow, Student Ministries Director

Amy Brunk, Children's Ministries Director

Connor Gibson, Worship Arts Director

Linda Totman, Church Administrator

Kim Goering, Office Assistant

Tiffani Eilrich, Children's Ministries Assistant

