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

- Worship
  - Disciple
    - Serve

Multiply



## - Pastor Jon Black

## The Jesus Way

The first believers in the early church were known as followers of the Way. Before Paul was converted, he persecuted followers of Christ and.....

> "...if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem." – Acts 9:2

Later, there was an uproar in Ephesus...

> "About that time there arose a great disturbance about the Wav" Acts 19:23

Still later, the Apostle Paul stood before Governor Felix in Caesarea:

> "I admit that I worship the God of our ancestors as a follower of the Way, which they call a sect." Acts 24:14.

Why were believers known as followers of the Way? Could it be perhaps because of their new radical way as of life as Christ-followers which was so different from the way of the world?

Jesus said of himself,

"I am the **Way**, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through me." - John 14:6

We typically understand this verse in terms of one's initial salvation in Christ and the promise of eternal

life. And although that would be true, perhaps there is another way of thinking about Jesus' statement; namely that He invites

Eugene Peterson observed:

us into a new way of living.

"The Jesus way wedded with the Jesus **truth** brings about the Jesus life."

In other words, when we adopt Jesus' way of living, we will discern His truth and experience His life.

Jesus' way of life is found on the narrow and more difficult path, and few find it by comparison. It is found by denying oneself, taking up the cross and following Him.

It is surely true that:

"We are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone."

But it is also true that:

"Although we are saved by faith alone, faith that saves is never alone." - Martin Luther

For....."Faith without works is dead." - James 2:17

And.... "Grace is not opposed to effort. It is opposed to earning." - Dallas Willard

- continued on page 7



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# LIFE STUDENT MINISTRIES

**MARCH 2025** 



## What We've Been Doing

# All Student Worship Night was Incredible!

On Saturday, Feb 8th, LifeStuMin hosted an All Student Worship Night in the Student Center. We encouraged all ages, 6th-12th grade to attend. This was our first joint event. We had a wide range of students attend! The night consisted of an hour of amazing worship, led by Keragan Gates and a team she put together. We also led the students in taking the Lord's Supper together, which was so special. There were also two other "stations" set up in which the students could engage worship. We had a "worship through art" area and a "worship through scripture reading/journaling" area with couches and cozy lighting. We had about 40 students attend and will definitely do it again!

## **Upcoming Events**

- March 5: Ash Wednesday
   Service (NO Jr High Youth
   Group)
- March 13: High School to Winter Jam
- March 16: NO H.S. Youth
   Group
- March 19: Jr. High Spring Break Event!
- March 30: Youth Sunday!

## **Teaching Themes in March!**

Middle School: Book of Matthew and the Life of Jesus High School: ROOTED in the Faith

## Countryside Kids

#### KINGDOM FAMILIES | MARCH 2 | 9:45 AM | STUDENT CENTER

Families (K-5) will share a light breakfast together and then learn about our new family challenge for the month. For the What Can I Do Challenge, kids will get the chance to think and talk about the needs and problems they see in the world around them. Then they'll dream up some plans to use their gifts, share God's love, and make a difference! Then we will come back in April to share what kids discovered!





#### **CCBC WORK WEEKEND**

Last April we took a team out to CCBC and helped them complete several projects needed to get the camp ready for the summer. As the date gets closer we will have more details about specific projects they will have for us but if you have any specific skills that you feel would be useful let us know and that will allow the camp to plan accordingly. Families with children are welcome but keep in mind there is no childcare so little ones would need to be with at least one adult in your family the entire time. We can usually find projects for elementary kids but again it will still require parental supervision. Transportation, lodging, and meals at the camp are covered.



#### VBS | JUNE 2-6 | 9:00-11:30 AM

Be on the lookout for more info for VBS. We will be creating a list for donations and volunteer needs! Registration will open April 1st!















What's your dream job? Do you want to be a pilot or astronaut? A teacher or musician? There are so many incredible jobs for us to pick from! God has given each of us special talents and skills that can help us discover what we want to do. But God gives us another job, too. It's the chance for us to follow God right now! In this fourweek series from the Gospels, we'll read about Jesus starting out his ministry and how he invited his followers — and us — to listen to God's voice, trust Jesus knows us, trust God's plans for us, and include people who aren't like us.

"I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

Philippians 4:13 (NIV

#### COVENANT CEDARS BIBLE CAMP | 1ST - 6TH GRADE

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



#### COMMUNICATION

to God's voice

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

#### MARCH

- 2 | Kingdom Families K-5 Families | 9:45 AM | Student Center
- Kids Town for preschool only
- Ash Wednesday Service | 6:30 PM (No Kids Life)
- **25** | Serve CR Meal (Opportunity to serve as a family!)
- 12, 26 | Kids Life | Ages 4 5th Grade | 6:15 PM
- 9, 16, 23, 30 | Kids Town | Ages 2 5th Grade | 9:45 AM







... connecting women to each other and to Jesus!

#### THURSDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY:



Beginning **Thursday, March 13 at** 7 **pm,** the six-week study of I and II Kings will be the focus. When hard times come and it seems God is deviat-

ing from the plan we assume our life should follow, we're more likely to want to tame God, not trust Him. It's then that we begin to press into our ways and our own timing. No human can carry the weight of being their own god, but so many of us try. We'll join author Lysa TerKeurst in Israel as she honestly reveals the places of distrust in her own heart while exploring the deeply applicable Scriptures that will teach us how to truly trust God. Write "I and II Kings" on your Connection Card this Sunday or call the Church Office, 620.241.4499 to reserve a book. The cost is \$23 per person.

**DISCIPLESHIP OF WOMEN:** Jesus told us to go and make disciples as He knew that was how the Good News would be spread to all the nations. And discipleship is how it would be shared from one person to another through relationships.

"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, haptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV).

Jesus illustrated a simple picture of what it looks like to share His love with others in everyday life. "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others" 2 Timothy 2:2 (NIV).

Peter, one of Jesus' disciples, wrote about how growing in Christ will change our character (2 Peter 1:5-8). The best way to experience this type of growth and life change, while partnering with the Holy Spirit, is through discipleship. We're called to grow in Christ and help others do the same (1 Corinthians 11:1).

Discipleship is a process through which women can learn how to walk daily with the Lord and pass on to others that same discipling vision Jesus gave His disciples. Our prayer is that women's hearts everywhere would be ignited to follow Jesus Christ and in turn disciple others; leaving a legacy of spiritual generations.

Our hearts are expressed in this verse:

"We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us." I Thessalonians 2:8. Will you join us on this great adventure? Is God asking you to invest in other women through discipleship? If so, we encourage you to attend an informational meeting on Monday, March 24 in the Library Area at 7 pm.

#### **SAVE THE DATES:**

**Saturday, April 26** – All Daughters Brunch, 10 am – 12 pm, Countryside Student Center. As a daughter of the King, you are invited to join us for a special morning of food, fellowship and fun! Watch for an opportunity to reserve a spot for you and your daughter, friends, co-workers, neighbors, etc.

May, June and July – Our plans are unfolding to provide opportunities for women to be a part of **The** Gathering Table during the months of May, June, and July. Maybe you haven't heard of this opportunity ... let me help you understand a bit what it's about. Because women long to be known and to know others, this is an opportunity to connect with and experience community in a much smaller setting. Somewhere deep within us, we know that we each shine brighter when hanging together than any of us would on our own. When signing up, you will be given a choice to either be a hostess (hosting 5 other women in your home or in a coffee shop or restaurant, or the park, for example) or being a participant (one of those 5 other women). The hostess will confer with the other women who are assigned to her group and a date will then be set when the group will get together. In addition, she'll let you know what you are to bring ... whether it's a dish to share if you are enjoying a meal together, or what the plans are for the evening. Each group is encouraged to meet three times, once each month, for two hours with the focus of the time together considering a Bible verse, answering a few Christ-centered questions, and then praying for one another. This is a time to promote fellowship and Christ-center conversation allowing us to get to know each other better. The sign-up table will be available three Sundays in April. Be sure to stop by and get your name on the list!

**Monday, August 18** – Fall Kickoff and Ice Cream Social

Monday, December 1 – Simply Still Christmas Event





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

### Ideas to Disciple Your Grandkids

How far do you live from your grandchildren? With the birth of our first to Micah and his wife Jordan in Kansas City, we now feel "the pull" that everyone told us about! If you are looking for a meaningful way to interact with your grandkids, especially those far away, I found myself in a conversation a couple of weeks ago that got me thinking.



Darrell and Shirlee Harper, our Countryside members who currently serve by leading and helping with the "Sew and Share" ministry, are the parents of Jonathan and grandparents to two grandsons who are four and eight years old. Their grand kiddos live near Chattanooga, TN – talk about "the pull!" I asked Shirlee to explain

how they stay in touch in significant ways so they can be a part of their grandchildren's lives, even from far away.

"Since our grandsons love listening to their *To-nieboxes*, we were asked if we would like to record a storybook for the boys so that they can hear us reading to them. FYI a *Toniebox* is described as a musical story box on which you can upload music and stories by placing the Tonie characters on top of the box. You can buy Tonies with music or stories already recorded on them or you can record a story on a Tonie yourself. Each Tonie holds 90 minutes of music and/or stories which is recorded by using an app on your phone. It's then downloaded onto the blank Tonie.

"We chose to read a book that we purchased from **Answers in Genesis** called "Justin and Jessie Build A Biblical Foundation" so our grandsons not only hear our voices, but will also listen to stories that are of eternal value."

Darrell assured me that the recording process is easy and forgiving. If you mess up, you can re-record your message until it's just the way you want it. And your grandkids can hear your voice anytime they want as they listen to their *Toniebox*.

For info on Tonieboxes, google: <u>Tonies Paw Patrol</u> <u>Toniebox Audio Player Starter Set with Chase, Kids</u> <u>3+, Light Blue, 3 lbs - Walmart.com</u>

What other significant things have you done to pass on your faith legacy to your grandkids over the miles? Let me know and we'll pass it along to our Crescendo crowd. We want to have a lasting impact on the next generation of disciples!









### **Widows Connection**

Walk into the room and you'll hear a lot of conversation and laughter. You'll find yourself feeling welcomed, appreciated, and loved.



You'll be offered a seat, food for thought, and of course, food for the stomach!

On the first Tuesday and the third Saturday of each month the **Widows Connection** gathers at the Cedars and Countryside respectively for food, conversation, and celebration. The Word of God is shared and so are hearts as these ladies find support and encouragement from being together. They understand, they come alongside, and they want you to know there is still so much of life to live. Join the fun!

Call the church office for more info and we'll put you in touch with Judy or Becky. Connect!









## **Divine Appointments**

In our daily lives, we often underestimate the potential impact of our interactions, not realizing that God can orchestrate even brief encounters for a greater purpose. These moments, often referred to as "divine appointments," serve as reminders that the Lord guides our steps. As Psalm 37:23 (NKJV) states, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." Such divine arrangements can lead to profound spiritual connections, even when the initial relationship seems unsuccessful. This testimony by Jean Ballew is a powerful example of God's perfect timing:

"When I retired from the Housing Coalition four years ago, little did I realize how often I would run into former clients. And even more surprising, that these encounters would have a spiritual nature. Who would have realized the eternal impact we might have, even when the relationship might be considered a failure. Although MHC is not officially designated as a faith-based non-profit, all of us working there are believers. So Jesus just spills out sometimes. I would often pray with clients. And they remember that! There's one client I often see at one of our fast food restaurants. Even though she was dismissed from the program because of drug use, she does not hold a grudge against us. No, she cheerfully greets me with a smile whenever we see each other. Recently, she contacted me via a private message on Facebook, asking for

prayer for a specific need. So I did, and posted it. Every few days I post another prayer—sometimes one of my own, sometimes one I find online. And she thanks me. I sense that sometimes she is going to want to meet face-to-face. And when we do, I'll share Jesus with her". JB

This experience exemplifies the principle found in 1 Corinthians 3:6 (NIV): "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow." Our role is to plant and water seeds of faith, trusting that God will nurture them in His perfect timing.

#### News and Events:

- ⇒ January 2025-to date—30 families assisted with housing in McPherson County
- ⇒ 3 Families have found a new home in the Sutherland Estates—Remaining homes still under construction
- ⇒ "Housing For Good"- Weekly Podcast
- ⇒ Annual Brush Up Mac event Aril 19, 2025 \*\*Deadline to sign up is March 15th\*\*

Blessings,

Chris Goodson





# Sunday, April 13 Baptism Services at 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.

If you or a family member desires to be baptized, contact the Church Office or mark "Baptism" on the back of your Connection Card. Watch the bulletin for more information.



## 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.



## -continued from page 1 "The Jesus Way"

Therefore, if we are to experience the 'Jesus way' of life that He desires for us, we must....

"Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose." - Phil 2:12-13

During the season of Lent, we will be focusing on this Jesus Way of Life.... how he lived, what he sacrificed, how he sought after God, as well as what he desires for his followers.

We will consider how we are called to pursue Christ by practicing the spiritual disciplines that he practiced in order to deepen his relationship with His heavenly Father and live according to the Way, the Truth and the Life that God intended for Him....and for us.





#### Hello Gardeners!

It's almost gardening season! This nicer weather can really get a person in the mood to want to start planting. While



the snow seemed a bit much at times, I think it will benefit this year's garden. It is signup time; we want to get all our plots filled! So here we go....

The 2025 Garden Agreement forms are in the office and ready to be filled out! You can also click the link below to print a copy, fill it out, and bring it to the office if you would like. We are again asking for a \$30 donation per garden plot (double plots \$60), to help defray costs such as water, etc. Also, it would be extremely helpful if you could call the church office, 620-241-4499, and let us know if you are keeping the same plot(s) as you had last year, or if you have decided not to have a garden this year. The goal is to have all returned plots solidified by **March 8**.

I will be sending out an email to all gardeners once we get a good list of returners and those who will be joining us for the 2025 gardening season. Again, if you know of someone who wants a plot and would be a good addition to our community, send them our way or have them give me a call at 620-242-3660 for details.

Exciting things happening...more to come!

Jacob Kaufman Director of Countryside Garden

https://csidecov.elvanto.net/file/06f0b055-eca6-4067-ab0b-feld4bd6a3b4/



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, KWCH Channel 12, as well as the church's website <a href="https://www.csidecov.com">www.csidecov.com</a> and Facebook page @csidecov.

## Thank You's

A sincere thank you to everyone who has reached out to us during this difficult time. Time and time again, as you are prompted to call, text, write, bring a meal, encourage, we find ourselves seeing the movement of the Lord in all you offer us. Thank you for listening to His promptings and for helping to make our journey more encouraging, comfortable, and lighter. We cannot do this without the body of Christ at our side. Please pray for continued resistance to secondary infection and for next steps as we meet with Lynn's oncologist on March 11.

-With humble love.

Countryside Covenant-

Thank you for your donation to STEPMC. Your financial support for our new program getting Ahead While Getting Out is extremely important and appreciated.

-Sincerely, Angela Brunk

Pastors Jon and Lynn Black

## Church Life Update

Birth:

Sophia Leigh, daughter of Luke & Nadine Gitchel, February 16

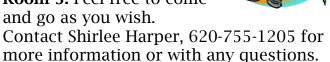
**Dedication:** 

Grayson Reed, son of Shawn & Audrey Buckbee

White Rose (new life in Jesus!):
Otto White



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.







On March 20th the **U** ♥ **B** ♥ **U** Workout group will celebrate one year of getting in shape! The first few workouts left us sore and stiff, but we soon moved past that and saw many benefits as we continue to be better caretakers of ourselves and become more fit to serve as God puts His plans before us. 1 Cor 6:19-20 says "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from

God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies." Our group has doubled in size from our original six to over twelve regulars. We are a relaxed and fun group!

On Wednesdays at 9:30am we do low impact aerobics, and strength training with weights and resistance bands on Thursdays at 9:30am. Our workouts are to videos that Judy Heiman and myself, Karen Young search and stream on the tv in the church gym. It's a new year...if you want to become a new you...come join us! We have fun! More information is available on our flyer at the Information Center in the church foyer.

## LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATE

The chill of winter is giving way to the budding warmth of spring. I love spring and what it brings, new life, new color, warmth, new smells, the beauty of God's handiwork in the green grass, flowers, trees, crops growing in the fields around us. We are reminded of the promise of new life and fresh beginnings. Spring is a season of rejuvenation and growth, both in nature and in our spiritual lives. One of the most fulfilling ways to celebrate this season of renewal is by intentionally learning something new about God every day, using scripture to guide our journey towards a deeper understanding and relationship with Him.

Spring is often depicted in the Bible as a time of renewal and new life.

2 Corinthians 5: 17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come"! NIV

Colossians 3:10, "... put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge, according to the image of the One who created him." NASB

It is a reminder that God's transformative power can renew our hearts and minds, no matter the circumstances.

To fully embrace the spirit of spring, we must commit to intentionally learning something new about God each day. This practice not only deepens our faith but also aligns our lives with the rhythm of renewal that spring embodies. Here are some practical steps to incorporate this intentional learning into your daily routine:

- Start with Prayer: Begin each day by asking God to reveal something new about Himself to you. Pray for an open heart and mind, ready to receive His wisdom and guidance.
- Choose a Scripture Passage: Select a passage of scripture that speaks to the theme of new life and renewal.
   Some suggested readings include John 3:3-8, which speaks of being born again through the Spirit, and 2
   Corinthians 5:17, which declares that anyone in Christ is a new creation.
- Reflect and Meditate: Spend time reflecting on the chosen passage. Consider what it reveals about God's character and His plans for renewal in your life. Meditate on how you can apply these truths to your daily walk with God.
- Journal Your Discoveries: Keep a journal to record what you learn each day. Write down insights, questions, and reflections that arise from your scripture reading. This will help you track your spiritual growth over time.
- Share with Others: Discuss your discoveries with friends, family, or a small group. Sharing your journey with others can provide encouragement and accountability, and it can also offer new perspectives on what you are learning.

As you immerse yourself in the scriptures and seek to learn more about God each day, it is essential to apply these lessons to your life. Here are some ways to incorporate what you learn into your daily actions and interactions:

- Practice Gratitude: Recognize and give thanks for the new life and opportunities that God provides each day. Expressing gratitude helps to cultivate a positive and hopeful outlook.
- Serve Others: Use your newfound insights to serve those around you. Whether through acts of kindness, volunteering, or simply offering a listening ear, let your actions reflect the love and renewal you experience in Christ.
- Embrace Change: Be open to the changes that God may be prompting in your life. Trust that His plans for you are good and that He is guiding you towards greater growth and fulfillment.
- Stay Connected: Maintain a strong connection with your faith community. Regular fellowship with other believers provides support, encouragement, and a shared sense of purpose.

As we welcome the arrival of spring, let us embrace the opportunity to renew our minds and spirits by learning something new about God each day. Through intentional study of scripture, reflection, and application, we can experience the transformative power of God's renewal in our lives. Just as the world around us blossoms with new life, so too can our hearts and minds be refreshed and invigorated by the boundless love and wisdom of our Creator. May this season of spring be a time of profound growth and deepening faith for each of us.

Reba Becker, Leadership Team Chair



Wednesday, March 5
6:30 p.m.
Worship Center
Interactive Service

#### February 2025 Attendance-includes online

	Christian	
	Formation	Worship
February 2	160	588
February 9	143	517
February 16	147	580
February 23	167	615

#### February 2025 Giving

February 2	\$35,072.49
February 9	\$31,645.78
February 16	\$21,959.79
February 23	\$23,205.90
Total Y-to-D	\$216,308.35
Giving vs Expenses Y-to-D	\$15,049.90



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## 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.

#### MARCH EVENTS (see enclosed calendar for full list of events)

Kingdom Families
Widows Connection
Men's Coffee
Celebrate Recovery
Men's Book Study
Prayer Group
Ash Wednesday Service
Daylight Savings Time Begins
MOMs Group
Sew & Share
Leadership Team Meeting
M.S. Spring Break Event
New Member Testimonies
Women's Discipleship
Ministry Coordination Council



## Countryside Staff

Jon Black, Senior Pastor

Jeremy Bower, Associate Pastor

Amy Brunk, Children's Ministries Director

Connor Gibson, Worship Arts Director

Lizy Johnson, Student Ministries Director

Lynn Black, Adult Ministries Director

Linda Totman, Church Administrator

Kim Goering, Office Assistant

Tiffani Eilrich, Children's Ministries Assistant

Keragan Gates, Production Manager

