



The Pulse of Countryside

VOLUME 25, ISSUE 10
October 2026
csidecov.com

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

- Worship
- Disciple
- Serve
- Multiply

Exploring the Sacred Pathways in the Psalms - Pastor Jon Black

A recent Barna Study entitled What Young Adults Are Looking for at Church, reveals that an increase of 34% of young adults (Gen Z and Millennials) are attending church more often than a year ago. This age group has moved from the least engaged to the most engaged.

What are they hoping to find at church? The study highlights several reasons; the top five being... a strong desire to pray and connect with God (45%), a longing to worship Jesus in community (38%), a yearning to experience joy in Jesus (35%), a hunger to understand what the Bible teaches (33%), and a need to confess their sins and experience healing (24%).

If other generations were asked what they are looking for at church, would the findings look the same or different?

I love the fact that members of Christ's Church are a very diverse body of believers. We have our different generational needs, our individual spiritual gifts, our unique personalities, our specific interests, passions, and priorities, and our unique ways to connect with God.

One of our Christian Formation classes has spent some time unpacking the Nine Sacred Pathways: Discovering Your Soul's Path to God.

These pathways highlight nine specific biblical ways that people have encountered God.



How do you best connect with God: through His creation, through your senses, through traditional liturgy, through silence and solitude, through helping the desperate, through caregiving, through celebration, through adoration and meditation, or through biblical study?

As I have spent time reading through the Psalms, it dawned on me that King David (along with the six other Psalmists, as well as a host of other unnamed writers) highlighted all of the different sacred pathways to express their love for God.

I thought it might be helpful and encouraging for us to spend time exploring examples of these pathways in our upcoming sermon series, Exploring the Sacred Pathways in the Psalms.

It is our prayer that we would be able to discern how we are best wired to encounter God. Perhaps we will even discover other pathways to lean into and deepen our relationship with Him.



October COUNTRYSIDE KIDS CALENDAR

4	Sunday	Kingdom Families 9:45 a.m. *Reminder that when we have Kingdom Families children ages 5 - 5 th grade will attend with their parent. Ages 4 and under are welcome to join the nursery if their parent is in an adult class! Kids Praise 11:00 a.m. Service
7	Wednesday	Toddler Time 9:30 a.m. Kids Choir 6:00 p.m. Kids Life 6:30 p.m.
11	Sunday	Children's Choir Sings during 8:30 a.m. Service and 11:00 a.m. Service Kids Town 9:45 a.m. Kids Praise 11:00 a.m. Service
14	Wednesday	Toddler Time 9:30 a.m. Kids Choir 6:00 p.m. Kids Life 6:30 p.m.
18	Sunday	Kids Town 9:45 a.m. Kids Praise 11:00 a.m. Service
21	Wednesday	Toddler Time 9:30 a.m. Kids Choir 6:00 p.m. Kids Life 6:30 p.m.
25	Sunday	Kids Town 9:45 a.m. Kids Praise 11:00 a.m. Service
28	Wednesday	Toddler Time 9:30 a.m. Kids Choir 6:00 p.m. Kids Life 6:30 p.m.

NEW SENSORY FRIENDLY SPACES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES!

We have been working for the last couple of months on planning and creating some spaces for children and families at Countryside that are sensory friendly. We have also been building a team of volunteers to support children during our CF hour (Kids Town) and on Wednesday nights (Kids Life). On October 4th the following spaces will see some changes to accommodate some of our children and families and Countryside!

- **Family Worship Room** | This room is what most of you know as the cry room/nursing mother's room. This is a small room off the worship center with windows that has adjustable lighting and sound. Families can worship in this space together while being able to control the sensory environment.
- **Nursing Mother's Room** | We wanted to continue to provide a private space for mothers if they desire that so the cry room will be re-located to the nursery. The greeter will be able to direct you to that new space!
- **Children's Sensory Room** | This room will be used by our volunteers as needed with children who need help with sensory and emotional regulation. This room is located in the children's area (room 9).

We will also have additional tools available if they are needed!

- **Child-sized noise-reducing headphones** | This will be in baskets along the west wall of the worship center.



Parents, if you have questions do not hesitate to reach out! We want to serve your families the best we can and want your input to ensure we are creating environments that are helpful! You can also make a note on your connection card and someone will reach out!



BAPTISMS

What a joy it was to celebrate baptisms on September 20th! Pictured above from left to right: Maya Bower, Maddie Bower, Hannah Butterfield, Harrison Brunk, Curt Wright, Angie Wright, Theo Hjertstedt.



CHILDREN'S CHOIR | OCTOBER 11

Our children's choir has been busy practicing on Wednesday nights before Kids Life! They will be singing during both services on Sunday, October 11th!



KIDS PRAISE | SUNDAYS

Currently, Kids Praise takes place during the 11:00 a.m. worship service and is a place where kids can enjoy an age-appropriate worship experience. We are looking for more teachers that would be interested in serving during the 8:30 a.m. Service. Contact Tiffani or Amy if you would like to serve once a month!



TODDLER TIME | WEDNESDAYS | 9:30 A.M.

Toddler Time is every Wednesday morning from 9:30-10:30 a.m. This is for toddlers (18 months - 3 years) and their caregivers. We will even have coffee for caregivers to enjoy during this time of play and fellowship! You can drop in any Wednesday and do not need to pre-register to come!



KINGDOM FAMILIES | OCTOBER 4TH

Student Center | 9:45 A.M.
Once a month, families (ages 5- 5th grade and their parents) have an opportunity to share a light meal together, worship, and get hands-on experience with discipleship practices and ideas that can be implemented at home.



Kingdom Families in October! I am so excited to launch a prayer journey for families that will go through the school year. You will get a copy of *Faith in Action: Prayers From James for the Next Generation*. This is a parent prayer journal published by Christian Parenting that will give you prompts each week as you pray truths over your kids! There is a podcast (*Pardon the Mess*) that goes with this journal each week as a supplement to the devotional.

We hope that you are receiving our weekly emails but if you are not please contact Amy to be added to the list!

LIFE STUDENT MINISTRIES

OCTOBER
2026

What We're Learning!

Youth Group teaching:

A Study on the Book of James

Wk 1: Faith Under Pressure

Wk 2: Don't Just Hear It

Wk 3: Words Matter

Wk 4: Closer Every Day

HS Christian Formation:

A Study on the Book of Romans

MS Christian Formation:

Choices: A 4-week series on how the decisions we make shape our lives and how to involve God in those decisions.



Prayer Requests!

- Pray for wisdom, patience and energy as leaders engage with students
- Pray for the lost students who haven't given their hearts to Jesus yet!
- Praise for a GROWING and THRIVING ministry! Our numbers continue to grow each week, hitting almost 100 students total each Wednesday night!
- Prayers for provision of more leaders for High School! We have had a great GROWTH of new students and need more adult leaders!

Upcoming Events

- Fields of Faith, Wed Oct 14th, 6:30pm @ the High School
- MS Fall Party Oct 28th, 6:30-7:45 pm
- HS Barn Party: October 25th, 7-9 pm
- MS Fall Retreat: Nov 6-8
- HS Fall Retreat: Nov 20-22

Equipping for PARENTS!

This fall, Nickie Stevenson and I will be co-teaching an adult CF class for parents of adolescents at 9:45 Sunday mornings. This class will cover topics such as:

- Adolescent Development (social, emotional, cognitive, physical)
- Christian Sexuality (12 lessons, discussion and video based)
- Conflict Resolution for parents and teens/adult children

There is no homework for this class but will be discussion based! Lots of mature topics that will be important to have a framework and language for when the time comes to talk and walk your own kiddos through them! We're excited!

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions!

Women's Events Team: A New Season of Connection

Over the past several months, our church has spent time praying and thinking about how we can continue to grow as a church where **discipleship is happening in the lives of our attenders and members**. As part of that conversation, Women's Ministry took a step back while we considered how it could best support our church's focus on discipleship.

During that time, several women expressed a desire to once again have opportunities for women to gather, enjoy fellowship, build relationships, and encourage one another. After listening to those conversations and talking together as a Leadership Team, we felt it was time to begin exploring what Women's Events could look like at Countryside.

We recognize that women at Countryside are already involved in many opportunities to grow and connect, including **Bible studies, Christian Formation classes, and other ministries throughout the church**. These new women's events are not meant to replace those opportunities, but rather to provide another way for women to meet people they may not already know, initiate relationships, and find connections that can lead them into other existing opportunities at Countryside.

In September, a group of interested women gathered to pray, share ideas, and begin planning. We are excited to take this first step with an event designed not simply to be another activity, but to create opportunities for women to **connect, encourage one another, and develop relationships that can grow into mentoring, discipleship, and spiritual growth**.

We hope **every woman at Countryside** will consider joining us! We'll begin the evening with a soup dinner and then spend some time creating an Advent wreath to take home and enjoy during the upcoming Christmas season.

But the craft is only part of the evening. Whether you love to craft or would rather simply sit and visit, **there is a place for you!** Come by yourself or bring a friend. Come for the soup, come for the craft, or simply come for the fellowship. Our hope is that this will be a relaxed evening where women of all ages can get to know one another, meet women they may not have crossed paths with before, and begin building meaningful relationships.

Tickets will be available Sunday mornings between services on November 1st and 8th at a table in the church. Tickets will also be available through an online link that will be shared on flyers and in the church bulletin. We are praying that this will be the beginning of something meaningful for the women of Countryside—a place where we can **connect, encourage, grow, and walk alongside one another in our faith**, while also helping one another become more connected to the many opportunities already happening within our church.

**Come for the soup.
Come for the craft.
Come and connect!**

Stephanie Hamilton, Sarah Corcoran, and
Michelle Logback
CCC Leadership Team



Gather 'Round Candlelight Dinner & Crafting

November 14 | 5:30–8:00 p.m.

Countryside Covenant Church





Save The Date

for our Women's Event

Join us for a special evening as we connect with other women, enjoy soup and the extras, and create an Advent wreath for your personal use.

14 November 2026 | 5:30 pm

Countryside Covenant Church
Student Center

Tickets on sale November 1

Sew & Share, Monday, October 19, 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.



Widows' Connection Upcoming Events:

* Tuesday, October 6, 9:30 am, monthly meeting @ The Cedars Event Center

* Saturday, October 17, 11:30 am, @ Countryside Café.

Contact Becky Hogue, 918-706-1257, or Diane Portenier, (785) 543-7426, for more information.



Next Step Class

Sunday, October 11, 9:45 am
Room 16

Newer to Countryside? Need a refresher on Countryside's beliefs and practices as an Evangelical Covenant Church? Want to get better acquainted with the staff?

This 5-week course will cover topics ranging from "What is church?" to "What does the Covenant affirm?" to "How can I get involved and connected here at Countryside?"

Reservation needed; call the church office or contact Pastor Lynn Black at lynn@csidecov.org

Church Life Update



Baptisms:

Maddi Sok-Bower, Maya Sok-Bower,
Harrison Brunk, Hannah Butterfield,
Theo Hjertstedt, Angie Wright, Curt Wright.

Birth:

Holly Mae, daughter of Rodney & Cheyna
Evinger, August 31.

Alexander James, son of Chris Dossett & Jasmine
Abare, September 1

Dedication:

Lowyn Rose, daughter of Jonah & Reanna Clarke



Taking Hold of One Corner

"I'm not sure where my kids and I are going to stay next week."

Imagine hearing those words from someone you know. She works. Her children attend school. You have seen her at community events and passed her in the grocery store. From the outside, everything seems fine. What you cannot see is that she missed work when one of her children was sick. Then her car needed repairs. She fell behind on rent and has been staying temporarily with a friend, but now that arrangement is ending.

Her story is not one particular person. It represents situations I have encountered many times through my years of working in housing. Housing instability often does not look the way we expect it to look. It can be a family staying with friends, a senior choosing between utilities and other necessities, or a working parent wondering how to make next month's rent. Sometimes the person struggling is someone we see every week, and we simply do not know.

After nearly two decades of working in housing, I have learned that when someone finally says, "I need help," our first response matters. We may want to immediately fix the problem, give advice, or ask how the situation happened. But what if we started differently? What if we simply said, "Tell me what's going on."

There are three things any of us can do: **listen, ask, and connect.** Listen without judging or assuming you know the whole story.

Ask what the person needs instead of deciding for them. Then help them connect with the right resource. That might mean making a phone call together, helping with an application, providing transportation, bringing a meal, or connecting them with an organization equipped to help. You do not have to solve the entire problem to make a difference.

Scripture tells us, *"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ"* (Galatians 6:2, NIV). I love the picture contained in the word carry. We are not told that we must fix every burden. Sometimes carrying another person's burden simply means taking hold of one small corner so they do not have to carry all of it alone.

The next opportunity to serve may never appear on a volunteer sign-up sheet. It may happen at work, in the grocery store, across the backyard fence, or in the hallway after church. Someone may quietly say, "I'm struggling."

When that happens, you do not need to have all the answers. Start with three things: listen, ask, and connect. Sometimes that is exactly what loving our neighbor looks like.

Blessings,
Chris Goodson





Gather Moms

Gather Moms at Countryside

Gather Moms is a ministry for moms in all stages of life. Our mission is to help you connect to other moms who get you, who know your joys and your struggles, and who can offer support and encouragement. All moms are welcome to come to any group, but some of the conversations will be geared towards certain stages of motherhood, so if that's important to you, please be aware of that!

First Wednesday | 6:30 p.m. - 7:45 p.m.

This group will meet the first Wednesday of the month throughout the school year (September-April). Conversation is focused around raising younger children and the joys and struggles that come with that. We offer childcare for children up to age four (with a reservation), and kids ages 4 and older can participate in Kids Life!

Third Saturday | 9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

This group meets the third Saturday each month in the cafe. Conversation is focused around raising preteens/teens. We provide each other encouragement and support as we navigate cultural challenges in parenting. We currently do not offer childcare for this gathering. Please notify Amy Brunk if you need assistance with childcare.

Fourth Tuesday | 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Moms of Adult Children/Grandchildren

This group is in a unique season of motherhood and can be challenging to navigate alone. They are currently reading the book "The Power of Praying for Your Adult Children."



The 3rd annual Night to Shine – McPherson County— is set for **Friday, February 12, 2027** at the McPherson Community Building. This event is a prom-style celebration for individuals with special needs—right here in our community; it is in partnership with the Tim Tebow Foundation.

This powerful event reminds each and every one of our special guests that they are known, valued, and loved. It is expected to welcome over 100 honored guests and their family members, along with hundreds of volunteers and vendor staff. We are inviting our community to partner with us to help make this unforgettable night possible.

Please scan the QR code for details on volunteering, registering a guest, or donating to this event.



September 2026 Attendance (includes online)

	Christian Formation		Worship
September 6	--		541
September 13	188		551
September 20	189		593
September 27	190		619

September 2026 Giving

September 6	\$26,969.88
September 13	\$24,741.84
September 20	\$19,512.92
September 27	\$18,533.79
Total Y-to-D	\$1,006,900.51
Giving vs. Expenses Y-to-D	-\$39,972.02

Your October 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 am

Christian Formation at 9:45 am

(see calendar for all events)



October Events

4| Kingdom Families
4| Newcomer's Brunch
5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21, 26, 28| Women's Exercise Group
6, 17| Widows' Connection
6, 13, 20, 27| Men's Coffee
6, 13, 20, 27| Celebrate Recovery
7, 14, 21, 28| Time of Prayer
7, 14, 21, 28| Toddler Time
10| KICY Alaskan Salmon Dinner
11| Next Step Class Begins
14| Fields of Faith
16-18| Men's Retreat
19| Sew & Share
20| Leadership Team Meeting
25| High School Barn Party
28| Middle School Fall Party



Countryside Staff

Jon Black, Senior Pastor

Jeremy Bower, Associate Pastor

Lynn Black, Pastor of Adult Ministries

Amy Brunk, Director of Children's Ministries

Lizy Johnson, Director of Student Ministries

Bobbie Kaufman, Director of Worship Arts

Linda Totman, Church Administrator

Kim Goering, Office Assistant

Tiffani Eilrich, Children's Ministries Assistant

Jase Brandt, Production Director