



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 12

December 2024



## Leadership Team Update - Mark Wurm, Church Chair

Merry Christmas!

I am most appreciative of our Leadership Team. In some areas we continue to learn and understand our duties, no doubt in some areas we are a bit behind but, we aspire to be timely for matters at hand. Sometimes new insights are shared. We regularly have voices that bring us back on track and point a way forward in obedience to God. Neither for us nor for staff do things always go as we plan, but we're realizing that's ok – I cherish this grace we extend to one another, and the encouragement to seek God's will which is our focus. **Proverbs 3: 5** *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.”*

At the last LT meeting Stan Neufeld shared about Properties Team projects, especially future projects that are long range in nature. Reba and I had attended a Midwest Conference zoom meeting last August focused on church finances. Sometimes we think our building is perhaps like our car: we wonder is it too showy, perhaps it would be good or pious to rather neglect it to demonstrate that our heart isn't worldly. But in that zoom meeting, as regards our church budget, it was asked if there was such a thing as a “non ministry” expense. Indeed, it was characterized that our facilities are tools for ministry. We encouraged Stan to continue long term planning with financial projections (these won't apply to this year's budget, but this reveals our ever evolving mindset for future budgeting).

December 8 we will be holding our annual meeting to make budget approval. I share further information from that August zoom meeting that I just mentioned. I do not view these as rules, but these can be considerations as we approve our budget. Percentages a church may expect to spend in their budget were presented as follows: payroll 50-60%, missions 10-20%, church programs 5-10%, facilities/mortgage 20-25%, and IT /technology 5-10%. We are blessed to have no mortgage, but for churches having a mortgage with National Covenant Properties, NCP seeks that the church have a cash balance on hand of 2-4 months of payroll and mortgage. An expectation regarding church tithe is 3.5% of church budget to the conference and 6.5% go to the denomination (10% total). A remark made was that “money is never the heart of the matter but it is always a matter of the heart!” Also, Paul's writing in **2 Cor 8: 18-21** was referenced, **verse 21** is *“for we aim at what is honorable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man.”* Accordingly, our LT has formally adopted church policies for handling of monies received and for handling of monies disbursed.

**Luke 2: 7** *“And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.”*

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

# THE PULSE OF COUNTRYSIDE



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

**Crescendo Progressive Christmas Dinner  
Saturday, December 7, 4:00-6:30 p.m.**

Join a small group of 8 and venture from house to house for each course of a meal. All groups will merge at one secret location for a grand finale dessert w/ fun included, of course!

Participants can expect to host a group of eight and provide one of three parts of a meal: appetizer, salad, or main dish. If you live out of town, we'll have you bring something for dessert. If you don't care to host in your home, choose a restaurant just for your course of the meal; be creative! Along the way we'll provide the conversation starters for you to "remember the stories of Christmas" and to tell your own story.

Sign up with the church office or write "Progressive Dinner" on your connection card. **Deadline is Dec. 1st.** Stay connected, get to know others, celebrate the season



**Crescendo Serves alongside Our Students**

Countryside's Pre-teens Mission Trip (5<sup>th</sup> Graders) will partner with Crescendo to learn about and provide simple services to folks in the Kansas City Area in June. Freedom Fire Covenant and KC organizations they work with will give our young people and our older people an opportunity to interact and serve alongside each other. If you are interested in learning more about this discipleship opportunity, contact Amy Brunk or Lynn Black.



**Merge Ministries** which we support as a church will provide especially tailored learning experiences in 2025. Don't wait too long to inquire!

- ⇒ **Mexico City/Leon, Mexico - May 16-26, 2025 (Crescendo Trip)**
- ⇒ **Bangkok/Roi Et, Thailand - August 31-September 8, 2025 (Crescendo Trip)**
- ⇒ **Berlin, Germany - July 25-August 8, 2025**

We're open to other opportunities to form in service this spring to disaster relief victims in North Carolina or Florida. If you sense God leading you to inquire, please let us know how to pray.





December 2024

# Life Student Ministries



Middle School Fall Retreat



High School Fall Retreat

## Fall Retreat at Covenant Cedars!

This month, Life student ministry spent two weekends up at Covenant Cedars Camp! We took 15 middle school students and 31 high school students! Our teachings for the weekends highlighted the Holy Spirit and taking steps to growing your faith NOW and not wait until later!



## Upcoming Events!



We've got two very merry christmas parties coming up this December! The middle School will have a Christmas Outfit contest, white elephant gift exchange and Christmas themed games. The High School will take part in a delicious Progressive Christmas Dinner and end with a gift exchange!



## Mission Arlington Summer 2025!

Come summer 2025, the youth are headed to the great state of TEXAS! We're headed to Arlington to serve with a non-profit organization called Mission Arlington. We'll be staying in a "host church" and leading VBS programs for apartment complexes around the city and providing help with any service projects! Please join us in praying over this trip! It will be hard but incredible work! Very practical ways to be the hands and feet of Jesus!

**MISSION ARLINGTON**  
Arlington, TX

July 20-26, 2025  
\$300 per person, \$50 deposit due at registration.

Join us this summer as we serve with Mission Arlington! We'll be participating in VBS programs, serving local families and volunteering with local work projects. This will not be an easy week, but a great one!





# Countryside Kids

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

Grab your sandals, sunblock, and swim gear because it's time for a Christmas Vacation! We'll be making sand angels and roasting chestnuts around an open bonfire on our tropical getaway. You've never experienced Christmas like this! In this series, we'll focus on the birth of Jesus and the way God had been planning things from the very beginning. We'll see how God sent Jesus for a reason, learn to trust God's timing, understand why God gives us what's best, and see how Jesus is why we celebrate because Jesus is God's gift to the world. *Just a reminder that we will not have Kids Town on December 22nd and 29th. Kids Town will resume in January.*

**CHRISTMAS vacation**

WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5
God sent <b>Jesus</b> for a reason.	We can <b>trust</b> God's timing.	God gives us what's <b>best.</b>	Jesus is why we <b>celebrate!</b>	Jesus is <b>God's gift</b> to the world.

*"The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world."*  
John 1:9 (NIV)



### OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE TOGETHER!

Thank you to the families that served a meal for CR in November! We have another opportunity to serve this month on December 19th! We will be serving the StepMC meal at FUMC. Link to sign up is in your weekly email or you can visit the church website to sign up! Thanks again to the following people for serving in November: Melissa Sullivan, Pruitts (Dallas, Megan, Abigail, & Oliver), Demels (Dylan, Summer, Lindsay, & Landyn), Franks (David, Natasha, & Kaylee), Eilrichs (Tiffani & Reanna), and Riersons (Courtney & Grady).



## DECEMBER PLANNER

1st Sunday	4th Wednesday	8th Sunday	11th Wednesday	15th Sunday	18th Wednesday
Kingdom Families	Program Practice 6:15-7:00 (K-5)	Kids Town	Program Practice 6:15-7:00 (K-5)	Kids Town & Christmas Caroling	Program Practice 6:15-7:00 (K-5)
19th Thursday	22nd Sunday	24th Tuesday	29th Sunday	January	
Serve StepMC Meal (See Sign Up)	Christmas Worship (No Kids Town)	Christmas Eve Services 5 & 7 PM	No Kids Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8th - Kingdom Families</li> <li>8th - Kids Town Resumes (Preschool)</li> <li>8th - Family Game Night</li> <li>10th - Kids Life Resumes</li> </ul>	

**CHRISTMAS WORSHIP**  
MULTIGENERATIONAL CHOIR

**SUNDAY MORNING DECEMBER 22ND**  
8:30 & 11:00 SERVICES

**NO CF BETWEEN SERVICES**  
**LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED**

COUNTRYSIDE COVENANT CHURCH



COUNTRYSIDE COVENANT CHURCH

## CHRISTMAS CAROLING

SUNDAY | DECEMBER 15TH | 5:30 - 8:00 PM



### CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Our annual caroling event will be on Sunday, December 15th this year. Arrive at 5:30 for caroling locations and then after caroling we will return to the church for soup, cookies, and cocoa! We will also have the McPherson Trolley until 8:00! They will take groups out every 30 minutes to look at Christmas lights in the community. Check out the church website to sign up to bring soup or cookies!

### COMMUNICATION

Most of our communication comes through weekly email and text. If you are not receiving the emails already, please contact Amy to get added to our list! amy@csidcov.org

### CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

Children will be joining the worship team on Sunday, December 22nd to help lead worship during both services. Preschoolers (3/4 year old class) will be practicing on Sunday mornings during Kids Town. Children (K-5) will be having practices on Wednesdays during December (6:15-7:00 pm). Children will be singing at the beginning and end of both services so make plans to attend be there for both! Light refreshments will be served between services (No CF on December 22nd).



### SEWING MINISTRY

Look how awesome our sewing ministry is! They made almost 20 bags to donate to OCC this fall. Some of these kids are on the ministry team for a second year and some are brand new to the team! The sewing team is led by Annie Wilson, Kristi Monroe, and Linda Pacey.





**As we approach** Christmas and celebrate the birth of Christ, it's a time for us to reflect on the gifts He has given us: hope, peace, joy, and the promise of eternal life. Our families at the Oak Harbor Cottages experience joy and peace through the meaningful gifts provided by our faith community. As we support them, we pray for them, share in their sorrows and joys, and strive to spread the love of Christ authentically.

**Like Jesus**, our families sometimes struggle to find a place in an inn. However, through our community, they find a safe, warm, and welcoming environment along with the love of Christ expressed through His people.

**With the construction** of additional cottages in Sutherland Estates, we strive to extend that love to more families who will discover safety, security, and, most importantly, a Christian community in their new permanent homes.

**As the year comes to a close**, we thank you for your continued support through your donations and prayers. Looking ahead to 2025, although we may not know what God has in store for us, we will remain faithful in everything we do.

**Luke 2:7:** "And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn."

**Families Served:**

396 – people served YTD

**News and Events:**

- ⇒ 3 Finished & 4 Homes in various stages of construction - Sutherland Estates
- ⇒ **Brush Up Mac - April 19, 2025**
- ⇒ **McPherson County Housing Conference, September 25, 2025**

Blessings,  
Chris Goodson



**Thank You's**

Thank you so much for the cards and prayers while I was having my eye surgeries. They went well and my vision is better.

- Mary Horn

Pastors Jon and Lynn want to extend their deep gratitude to the Body of Christ here at Countryside. Your tangible and prayer support during Lynn's cancer journey is very much felt and appreciated. We are in a treatment cycle now for 12 weeks. We are also very mindful of those on our regular prayer lists from week to week who also need whatever the Holy Spirit might lead you to provide for them. Thank you for loving one another well for when one part hurts we all hurt! And when one part celebrates we all celebrate!

*"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth."*

- 3 John 1:4

**Church Life Update**



**Birth:**

Owen Micah, son of Jacob & Topanga Dailey, October 30

Silvie Joy, daughter of Levi & Kayla Sides, November 15

**Dedication:**

Phineas Sinclair, son of Jonathan & Katie Epp

**Marriage:**

Crissy Cooks and Patrick McCarthy, November 9

**New Members:**

Joe & Susan Border, Judah Neff, Trent & Angie Timson, Nolan & Joanna Trapp, Mark & Renita Williams, Curt & Brooks Wilson, Kerry Zickafoose

**White Rose (new life in Christ!):**

Kaelynn Bower  
Cade Hendricks

*-continued from page 1, "Leadership Team Update"*

I perhaps have shared this before, but it has now been four years since my Dad passed and I remain increasingly grateful for good memories both of what he taught me and for the way he lived as an example to me of how to live abiding in God's love. My dad gave me a beautiful picture of peace, comfort, and wonder or awe in telling me how every year when he would hear the Christmas story at their Lutheran Church in Oberlin it gave him complete peace. The reason was that the end of day milking was his daily personal time with his dad (grandpa). He and grandpa would share the days accomplishments, joys, goals, struggles, and ponder questions about life. Dad further explained that this was a warm and secure time - the inside of the barn was a safe, warm, inviting and cozy place with fresh smell of hay and the satisfied animals about. I see there is something in us that recognizes and is attracted to life, to creation that God has given us. Dad's picture is meaningful to me - while I never shared the routine daily experience, I fondly remember the barn. Dad said as he grew up this is how he imagined the peacefulness and beauty of Jesus being born in the manger - to my dad the birth of Jesus, Immanuel, God with us, seemed among the most beautiful of all passages in the Bible. I wish you all peace and joy this Christmas!



In 2011, a new community operated ministry was envisioned to make construction materials reusable that had been going to the landfill available to the public at a much reduced price. The proceeds are shared by non-profit organizations within the county. Thus the ReUse It Center was begun.

Today we are in need of volunteers who might help us with this vision. Volunteering opportunities abound from receiving, packaging, pricing, testing, cleaning, working the cash box, the list goes on. ReUse It is an enjoyable place to work and many relationships have been established over the years and continue to be built. There are already many folks at Countryside who give of their time to help and for that, we are very thankful. If you have an hour or two (or more!!) that you could give as a volunteer, please come out and see us. Contact Shulah Neff or Lavon Ediger for details.

**Adult Christian Formation**

**Marriage Retreat**

Give a gift that will breathe life into your marriage with attendance at Covenant Cedars 2025 Marriage Retreat Feb. 14-16.

"Kindred" seeks to give you and your spouse space and time alone, away, recharging, in a beautiful atmosphere with others who seek to find the Lord's presence alongside you. Accommodations are all private but vary (it's a camp/conference center). Meals, lodging, atmosphere are all TOP-notch w/ romantic attention to detail. Truly a blessing by those of us who've attended - just ask.

Scholarship money available through Lynn Black. You can register online directly with Covenant Cedars CC but please tell the Marriage CF class or Lynn Black so we know to include you on our list. You can drive separately or vanpool.

[Marriage Retreat : Retreats : Covenant Cedars Bible Camp](#)



**Spring 2025 Christian Formation classes** would appreciate your feedback if you are planning to attend for the first time or change classes. Offerings will be advertised on our Countryside church app, website, and sent out via email. Make sure you have the church on your address list and *not going to your junk mail!* This helps us plan for room set-up. Classes begin **January 5<sup>th</sup> at 9:45am** alongside all students and nursery care.



**\*\*DATE CHANGED\*\***

**HARVEST FESTIVAL  
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8**

**CELEBRATING GOD'S GOODNESS**

Worship Services  
8:30 & 11:00 a.m.

Christian Formation - 9:45 a.m.  
Potluck Dinner - 12 Noon  
Business Meeting - 1:15 p.m.

Potluck Dinner - If your last name is A-L, please bring a pie or dessert. M-Z, please bring a crockpot of soup. Salad and breads will also be served.

November 2024 Attendance (includes online)		
	Christian Formation	Worship
November 3	186	581
November 10	77	581
November 17	169	561
November 24	138	528
November 2024 Giving		
November 3		\$32,650.23
November 10		\$25,200.66
November 17		\$28,280.67
November 24		\$29,828.61
<b>Total Y-to-D</b>		<b>\$1,109,323.22</b>
<b>Giving vs Expenses Y-to-D</b>		<b>-\$60,396.93</b>



**Widows' Connection  
Christmas Party:**

\* **Saturday, December 7, 9:30 a.m.,  
The Cedars Banquet Room.**

**We'll play the gift exchange game, so bring a \$5.00 wrapped gift. Food will be catered, so come and relax, have fun and enjoy!**

**Contact Judy Blaine, 360-355-0943, for more info.**



MOMS Group will meet **Tuesday, December 10 at 9:00 a.m.**

We'll be having a fun Christmas party! We hope you'll come and enjoy a brunch, find encouragement and friendships! Childcare provided for children birth-5 years old. Contact Lizzy Butterfield, [lizajane.4893@yahoo.com](mailto:lizajane.4893@yahoo.com) or Allie Diederich, [alliediederich@gmail.com](mailto:alliediederich@gmail.com) for more information!



Countryside Covenant Church  
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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. 22 or Dec. 29)

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

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 1                 | Kingdom Families                        |
| 3                 | Widows Connection Christmas Party       |
| 3, 10, 17         | Men's Coffee                            |
| 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 | Celebrate Recovery                      |
| 4, 11, 18         | Time of Prayer                          |
| 4, 11, 18         | Christmas Program Practice              |
| 7                 | Crescendo Progressive Christmas Dinner  |
| 8                 | Harvest Festival & Business Meeting     |
| 10                | MOMs Group                              |
| 15                | Christmas Caroling Event                |
| 17                | MOMs Playdate                           |
| 22                | Multi-Generational Christmas 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

Connor Gibson, Worship Arts Director

Lizy Johnson, Director of Student Ministries

Linda Totman, Church Administrator

Kim Goering, Office Assistant

Tiffani Eilrich, Children's Ministries Assistant

Keragan Gates, Production Director

