



THE BIBLE CHAPEL / C O N N E C T E D



THE BIBLE CHAPEL

SUMMER 2026

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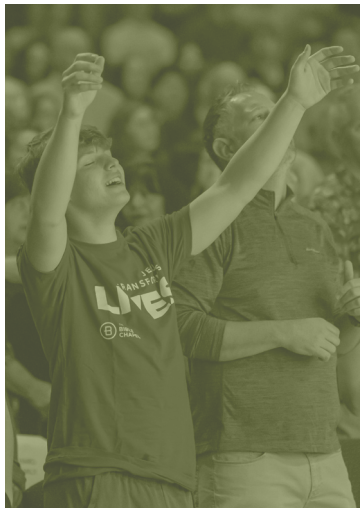
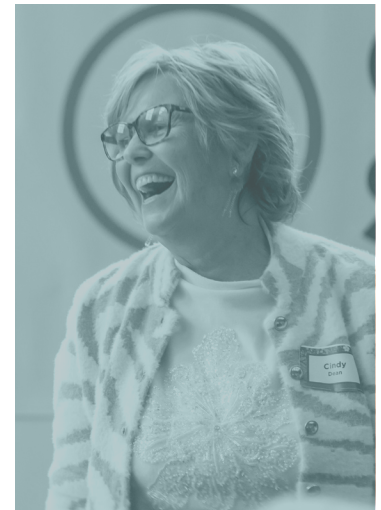
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We have three articles from our staff with practical and tangible action steps to help keep God at the center of your summer rhythms this season.

Contending for the Faith

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Hear from TBC Elder, Joe Melaragno, about our upcoming fall conference, *Ready. Set. Go. Every Believer Confident.*



God's Pursuit of My Surrendered Heart

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We are called to shine God's light, but what does that mean for the everyday? We can't wait for you to read and find out!

WELCOME TO

When we hear the word "connection," our minds often jump to the digital: the strength of a WiFi signal or the ping of a new notification. But true connection usually lives in the quiet spaces - a sunrise viewed in silence, or a conversation that lingers long after the coffee has gone cold. In an era where we are perpetually "linked," many of us are finding that we are over-connected yet deeply out of touch, prompting a growing collective urge to finally unplug.

Yet, as we pull away from the noise, we find space for the one truth that remains constant: the most beautiful, life-giving connection we have is our relationship with Jesus. How do we care for this precious connection in the season ahead?

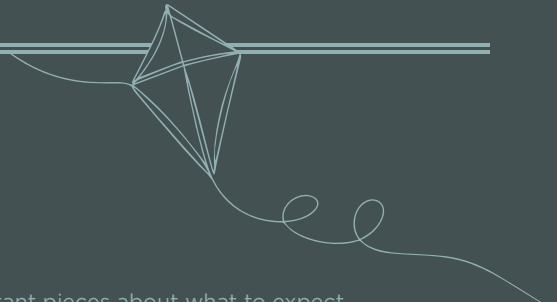
We know that with summer, schedules and rhythms often fly out the window, school books close, beach vacations are planned, and late nights fill our calendars. While the pace changes, our need for God doesn't. Our hope for this issue is to equip you and your family to stay deeply connected to Him all summer long.

Inside, you'll find actionable and inspirational articles from our staff designed to help you keep God at the center of this season, whether you are leading your kids, your students, or your own time with the Lord. You can dive into those resources on page 6.

Even though our formal ministry year ends each May, we want to make sure you know that ministry still happens even in the summer - maybe just at a more relaxed pace. To help you stay connected to the body of Christ, we've included our full event calendar on page 16,



CONNECTED



followed by two important pieces about what to expect at TBC in late summer to help you grow in your church-community connection.

An integral part of summer, where we sometimes can see connections truly flourish, is within our local community. Between farmers' markets, graduation parties, baseball games, and picnics, the desire to share life with others is exemplified during summer. As you'll learn in this issue of *Connected*, sharing our faith with our communities is not just a Biblical calling (Matthew 28:18-20); it is truly life-giving.

If the idea of evangelism feels overwhelming, you aren't alone. We want to help you take a small, natural step toward that call. On page 34, we've provided everything you need to host a community barbecue (minus the guests and the decorations)! With a curated playlist, prayer, ice-breakers, and recipes, our hope is to make reaching out feel tangible and low-pressure. You'll also find a heartfelt piece written by one of our staff members about what happens when we surrender our hearts to God and let His light shine through and around us.

Summer is a season where adventure and possibilities feel endless! Do you feel the anticipation? We invite you to surrender your summer to God and see what He will do through you!

Questions or comments?
Email us at editor@biblechapel.org



The Connected Team

Section 01

Family Connection

**SUMMER
RHYTHMS**



01



A CHAPEL KIDS
GUIDE FOR

Summer + Family Connection

Faith in the Ordinary



USING SUMMER'S RHYTHMS TO
CONNECT WITH YOUR TEEN

HOLDING ONTO
SPIRITUAL RHYTHMS
IN THE



Days of Summer

FAMILY CONNECTION



A CHAPEL KIDS
GUIDE FOR

Summer + Family Connection

Summertime brings warm sunshine, no school, and endless possibilities for things to do! We look forward to the freedom, but also dread the anxiety it can evoke. I want to challenge you to be intentional this summer! Build a summer routine that builds your family time, creates sweet memories, and connects you with the people you love the most while also pointing your family to God's Word!

Start your summer by sitting down together and building a schedule! Having a daily routine can help the day pass by without that "I don't know what to do" feeling! Try a balanced approach, making sure family time and time in God's Word are prioritized. Pick a few items from the list on the right, and feel free to get creative, adding your own ideas!

I want to challenge you to be intentional this summer!

Create a bucket list: Have everyone in your family pick one or two things they really want to do this summer. It's ok to set parameters, such as cost or travel distance limits. This can be a great way to share interests with one another and make sure everyone has a turn picking. Parents, make sure you pick something, too! Take a field trip somewhere fun, have a pool day, invite friends over for a movie, or go for a hike!

Find ways to be creative: Incorporate creative elements to your summer by building a fort, maze, or obstacle course in the backyard! Make new summer recipes or fun snacks together. Draw a sidewalk chalk masterpiece or track for their scooters in the driveway. There are so many ways to get those creative juices flowing, and doing it together builds connection and teamwork!

Tech Free-Time: Try scheduling days to be tech-free. This is great for you and your kids! Be intentional! Get creative or active and plan activities that engage everyone, so you don't even miss the screen. This time together builds your relationships and adds more fun to the memory bank!

God Sightings: Look for "God Sightings" all summer! You can find Him in the beautiful creation, the kindness of friends and family, and in the ways He provided when you may have gotten lost or had car issues. Keep a family journal or write them on slips of paper and place them in a jar. Be sure to always look for the way God is working in your lives!

Family Devotion: Don't forget to pick out a Family Devotion to either start the day or use it as a great way to finish the day! Check out The Hub (TBC Bookstore in the Main Lobby) for some great options, or reach out to children@biblechapel.org, and we would be glad to help!

Fulfill a challenge: Think of a skill you can work on as a family. Learn about a topic, read a book of the Bible, hike an entire trail, memorize scripture (like the verses from the Chapel Kids' summer challenge), or make it to every park - whatever you choose, be sure to document it, look back on the fun you had, and do it together!

Read together: Take a trip to the library and pick a book for each day or a chapter book to read over several days. Get comfy, grab your favorite stuffed friend, and read away! Discuss your favorite characters and favorite scenes during mealtimes and walks. Who knows, it may inspire some creative ideas!

Quiet Time: It's essential for kids to have some quiet time for themselves, and it's a great moment for you to recharge! Be intentional during this time. Kids could read, listen to music, stories, or scripture quietly in their room while doing a quiet activity or simply napping. Sometimes, a break from each other and time to recharge is the best thing to help everyone get along!

Incorporating all of these ideas may not be possible, so start small! Pick one or two items that intrigued you. Get your family on board by letting them help with the plans and ideas as you build a summer that promotes family connection and encourages you to grow in God's word, too!

By Becky Breneman,
Chapel Kids Director,
South Hills



Faith in the Ordinary



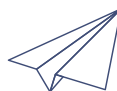
USING SUMMER'S RHYTHMS TO CONNECT WITH YOUR TEEN

Last summer was our family's first real taste of what summer looks like with a child in school. Our oldest had just finished kindergarten, and suddenly the rhythm of our home completely changed. We live in a neighborhood with about fifteen kids all around the same age, and they all love playing in the street together. **Which meant that every single morning started the same way: our kids bursting into the room asking, "Can we go play outside?!"**

At first, it was great - bikes everywhere, kids laughing and running up and down the street, and by the grace of God, somehow dodging the occasional car that insists on flying down our street like it's the Indianapolis 500. It felt like the kind of childhood you hope your kids get to have. But we quickly learned something: when you don't have intentional rhythms, summer can take over. Bedtimes drifted later... and later... and later. A few nights, we looked at the clock and realized it was almost 11:00 PM and thought, "Well... this probably isn't our best parenting moment." At one point, we had to remind ourselves that just because it's summer, doesn't mean our kids should live like tiny nocturnal raccoons surviving on popsicles and neighborhood chaos.

Playing outside and enjoying summer are great things. But it doesn't take long to realize that if you're not intentional, the good things of summer can slowly crowd out the most important things. And that's true for our spiritual lives, too.

Discipleship in the home doesn't start with what parents teach, it starts with what parents love.





By Brad Sommerfeldt,
Pastor of Chapel Students
High School, South Hills

For families with students in Jr High and High School, summer can easily become a season where connection with God drifts. Schedules change, vacations happen, routines disappear, and spiritual rhythms that were present during the school year quietly fade. But summer doesn't have to disconnect your family from God. With a little intentionality, it can actually become a great discipleship season.

In Deuteronomy 6:6-7, God describes what faith in the home should look like: “And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.” In other words, faith isn't meant to live in one moment a week; it's meant to show up in everyday life.

Here's the reality: the greatest spiritual influence in a student's life isn't a pastor or a church program - it's their parents. And that influence flows

from something simple... Students seeing that their parents actually love Jesus. Students can spot authenticity quickly. When they see mom and dad reading Scripture, praying, serving others, and talking naturally about God and Jesus, it leaves a mark. Discipleship in the home doesn't start with what parents teach, it starts with what parents love.

And if I can be honest for a moment, there's a small gut-check here for all of us. If the only reason your student knows you're a follower of Jesus is that your family goes to church occasionally and you label yourself as a “Christian”, then there's some work to do. Following Jesus was never meant to be a label we put on or something we attend once a week. It's meant to shape everyday life.

The good news is that the summer actually gives families great opportunities for this - car rides to the pool, late-night conversations, walks around the neighborhood, sitting around a fire pit - these ordinary moments can become natural places

to talk about faith and what God is doing.

So, as summer approaches, the goal isn't to create some complicated spiritual plan. **The goal is simple: stay connected to Jesus yourself, and invite your student into that journey with you.**

Pray together. Open Scripture together. Talk about faith in normal conversations. Let your student see that your relationship with Jesus is real, and don't forget to pray. Ask God regularly to give you wisdom as a parent and to open doors for intentional conversations with your student. Ask Him to help you notice the small moments that can turn into meaningful ones. When we continually bring our families before the Lord, He is faithful to guide us.

Summer will disrupt your routines, but it doesn't have to disconnect your family from God. With a little intentionality, it might become one of the most meaningful seasons of spiritual growth in your home.

HOLDING ONTO SPIRITUAL RHYTHMS

IN THE



Days of Summer



There's something about summer, isn't there? The days seem to go a little longer, the nights a little softer, and the world seems to relax a little bit, but in a good way. Bedtimes aren't as rigid, and suddenly, your schedule is filled with outings, picnics, family, and those random plans that turn out to be the best ones of all.

In a way, summer helps us breathe. The pace slows down, expectations ease up, and we get a break from the grind. But if we are honest with ourselves, this can also quietly nudge some of our deeper rhythms out of alignment. The things that used to help ground us, like quiet time, prayer, Bible study, etc., can slowly start to slide to the side without us meaning for this to happen. And it's not dramatic, you know? It's not like we wake up one day and say, "Well, you know what? I'm just gonna walk away from my faith." No, it's not like that at all. It's more subtle than that. We're living our lives, doing our thing, being spontaneous and all that, and at some point, we're just not feeling quite as connected to our faith as we used to be. Not feeling quite as centered on Christ. Not feeling quite as in control of our reactions to whatever is happening to us in a given day.

The interesting thing is, rhythm is built into all of it. Day and night. Work and rest. Even the very seasons. Life was built to have rhythm, not chaos. And if you think about the life of Jesus, you'll notice that He was always taking time to get away and pray. He was always in rhythm

with worship. There was intention in the middle of all the busyness. I think that's partly why the season of summer can feel a little tricky. It's lovely, don't get me wrong. It just shakes up the rhythms that are familiar to us. And when those rhythms go away, it can expose something significant to us. Were we seeking God out of habit or out of desire? This isn't about guilt. Not even close. It's more of an invitation. It's an invitation to be intentional, even in the midst of a season that feels easy.

It's an invitation to make space for God in ways that feel relevant to the season you're in, rather than forcing a rhythm that isn't there.

Because summer really is a gift: the sunsets, the slower evenings, the time with people we love. Those things matter. But growing in your faith still takes a bit of intention, too. Not a rigid structure, but small, consistent choices to stay connected. Maybe it's a shorter quiet time in the morning. A prayer during a walk. A moment of gratitude while watching the sun go down. Nothing complicated. Just a willingness to stay anchored, even as everything else shifts a little.



Practical Ways to Stay Connected TO GOD THIS SUMMER

SHORTEN, DON'T ELIMINATE

If your usual quiet time during the school year is 30 or 45 minutes, that may not be realistic in the summer. Early morning practices get disrupted by late nights. Travel changes location and timing. Do not scrap it altogether. Five to ten intentional minutes are better than none. Read one Psalm slowly. Pray one focused prayer for your family. Write one sentence of gratitude in a journal. **Psalm 1** describes the blessed person as one who delights in the law of the Lord and meditates on it day and night. Meditation does not require an elaborate setup. It requires attention. Summer may shorten your rhythm. Do not let it remove the rhythm entirely.

CHOOSE ONE NON-NEGOTIABLE ANCHOR

When life feels uncertain, try picking one, daily habit that helps you feel grounded. This might be reading Scripture with your morning coffee, reading a devotional before bed, praying for your children as they leave, or listening to worship music while you make dinner. In **Daniel 6:10**, we see that Daniel prayed three times a day, even when it was risky. His routine helped him stay steady during hard times. Your surroundings might not be hostile, but there are still plenty of distractions. Having one steady moment each day can help you refocus.

TAKE SCRIPTURE OUTDOORS

Summer is sensory. Let creation reinforce truth. **Read Psalm 19 under an open sky: "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands."** Sit in your yard and read **John 15** about abiding in the vine. Notice branches and leaves. Let the metaphor move from abstract to tangible. When you hike, thank God for breath in your lungs. When you swim, remember the symbolism of baptism. When you watch a sunrise, repeat **Lamentations 3:23: "His mercies are new every morning."** Faith does not have to stay inside. Summer gives you a living classroom.

PREPARE FOR TRAVEL SPIRITUALLY

We plan snacks, hotel reservations, and entertainment for trips. Rarely do we plan how to stay spiritually grounded. Before leaving town, figure out where you will worship on Sunday, when you will read Scripture, and when you will gather as a family to pray. **Psalm 139:9-10 says, "If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there Your hand will guide me."** Wherever you go, God is already there. Travel can become a reminder of His vastness and presence rather than a break from Him.

GIVE YOURSELF GRACE BUT NOT EXCUSES

You will miss days. You will oversleep. You will get caught up in activities. **Romans 8:1 says, "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."** God is not tallying your missed quiet times, but grace does not mean indifference. It means you can return without shame. If you miss a day, begin again the next. Faithfulness is built in small, repeated choices.



By Dave Shields,
Pastor of Men's
Ministry and Care

J E R E M I A H 3 1 : 1 2 E S V

**They shall come
and sing aloud
on the height of Zion,**



AND THEY SHALL BE RADIANT OVER
THE GOODNESS OF THE LORD, OVER
THE GRAIN, THE WINE, AND THE OIL,
AND OVER THE YOUNG OF THE FLOCK
AND THE HERD; THEIR LIFE SHALL BE
LIKE A WATERED GARDEN, AND THEY
SHALL LANGUISH NO MORE.





VBS INFORMATION

VBS Registration
Opens June 1

VBS Week
June 22-26

MILESTONES

Baptism Weekend
June 13/14 + August 8/9

Child Dedication Weekend
May 23/24 + July 25/26

CONNECTIONS

Discover TBC
June 7, July 5, + August 2



For the most up-to-date information,
scan the QR code!





YOUNG ADULTS

Summer Kick-Off
MAY 18

Weekly Gatherings
MONDAYS

OUTREACH

Blood Drive
MAY 28

CHAPEL MEN

Chapel Men's Gatherings
First + Third Thursdays

Chapel Men's Large
Group Prayer Meeting
First Thursday

CHAPEL STUDENTS

56 Summer Kick-Off
June 7

Summer Camp
June 28-July 2

Chapel Students + Chapel Kids
Pool Party
July 19

56 Bootcamp Retreat Info
Meeting
June 28

CARE

Dementia Care
June 4, July 2, July 6,
July 9, + August 6

Cancer Care
First + Third Thursdays

Women's Recovery
Mondays

Men's Recovery
Tuesdays

SPECIAL NEEDS

Respite
July 11, July 25,
August 8, + August 22

Day Camps
June 1-4, 8-11, + 15-18

CHAPEL SPORTS

Summer Sports Camp
July 6-9, July 20-23, + July 3-6

Mini Basketball
Begins August 24

Upward Flag Football + Cheer
Season begins
August 10

Men's Open Basketball
Thursdays

Women's Faith and Fitness
Mondays, Thursdays,
+ Saturdays

CHAPEL SAGES

Summer Picnic
July 15

RAINFOREST FALLS

Exploring the Nature of God TM

WE CAN'T WAIT FOR
YOU TO JOIN US
JUNE 22 - 26!



Step through the mist into Rainforest Falls, overflowing with wild waterfalls, towering trees, and colorful creatures.

Beneath a canopy of chattering birds and howling monkeys, kids plunge into a lifelong adventure of discovering the nature of God. They'll explore what it means to be rooted in relationship with God, their creator, a safe place in life's storms.



JUNE 1

KID REGISTRATION OPENS!

Kids ages 5-10 can join us for an adventure at one of our host homes from either 10 AM - 12 PM or 6-8 PM.



Scan the QR code to register and learn more.

A PERFECT FRIEND

By Joshua Smelser

Like a stuffy hot room on a mid-summer's day
Begs for windows to open and the breeze to give way
So our spirits long for the sigh of relief

THAT THE PRESENCE OF OUR SAVIOR BRINGS

Our slumped stifled souls
long to slow down and stroll
with grass under feet through the wide-open air
Where the breeze rustles leaves
in the summer sun's glare

IN HOPES OF MEETING OUR CREATOR THERE



And in that place
In the stillness

Look closely and you'll find
You and I were designed
With connection in mind
To align
In a grace filled embrace
With our Father
But also to be
Face to face with each other

And each one
Called to show love to the others
As we walk hand in hand
As Sisters and Brothers

Longing to link
Someone's stories with ours
Like constellations connecting
The dark between stars
Knowing something beyond ourselves
Brings us together

AND FOREVER

Depends on our choice
As to whether
We accept the free gift
That eternally unites
You and me and our God
Through the Son's sacrifice

So when you feel a lone soul
Reaching from a dark room
Lead them into to the sun
And remember that soon

OUR LONGING FOR A PERFECT FRIEND WILL BE
COMPLETELY FOUND IN HEAV'N'S ETERNITY

Section 02

TBC Connection

STEPPING OUT IN FAITH

02





***CONTENDING
FOR THE FAITH***

TBC CONNECTION

LET'S
TALK **Small
Groups**

By Joe Melaragno
TBC Elder

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH

Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

JUDE 1:3

Apologetics is, in its most basic form, simply the application of biblical truth to the concerns of the day.

K. SCOTT OLIPHINT,

The Battle Belongs to the Lord: The Power of Scripture for Defending Our Faith

Have you ever been asked a question about your Christian faith that you haven't been able to address?

Do you freeze up? Do you give some type of general answer?

How do you discern if the question was even a reasonable question to be asked of the Christian faith?

Do you even feel qualified to be in the conversation?

Let me address that last concern first –

YES, YOU ARE!

Matthew tells us what Jesus commanded and encouraged right before He ascended back to the Father: "And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, ... And behold, ***I am with you always, to the end of the age.***'" Matthew 28:18-20 (emphasis added).

Jesus commanded us to go. Jesus said that He is with us. Therefore, we are qualified.

Luke also recounts this command immediately prior to the ascension in the beginning of the Book of Acts, and the rest of the New Testament, from that point forward, is about believers evangelizing the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the known world. Since that time, every generation of Christians has been challenged by unbelievers and false teachers alike. And we are exhorted by scripture to defend (1 Peter 3:15) and contend (Jude 1:3) for our faith. It's not a suggestion, it's a command because it's central to the

mission. It's not the job of only a specialized group of "super-smart, super-savvy" Christians – it's a job assigned to us all. As Pastor Dave DiDonato challenged in the URGENT GOSPEL series, "An urgent gospel church consists of believers who jointly ***own the responsibility*** to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

We will always be an urgent gospel church.

How do we do this when we feel inadequate for the task? Simply, we equip ourselves. First, and foremost, we must understand scripture and the story it's telling – from creation (declared good by God Himself), to the fall of man, leading to God's plan of redemption through His Son, Jesus Christ, and ultimately the restoration of all things good for those who place their trust in Jesus. We do this by actively engaging in God's Word daily. The more we get to know Him, the better and more confident we'll be in interacting with those who desperately need the gospel.

Second, we take advantage of resources that Christians have compiled over the years in apologetics (the defense of the faith) and evangelism. There is a lot out there, and while we can't become experts in everything, the good news is that we don't have to in order to become better and more adept at having conversations about our faith.

One of the ways The Bible Chapel will help equip believers this year is by hosting an all-day Apologetics & Evangelism Conference on September 19: **Ready, Set, Go: Every Believer Confident**. Mark Farnham, Founder & Director of Apologetics for the Church, will be leading the conference. The mission of his ministry is to "equip ordinary believers to effectively and confidently share the gospel".

WE'LL BE COVERING TOPICS SUCH AS:

Helping believers understand how they can effectively engage unbelievers with the gospel.

Understanding unbelievers - until we understand what God says is true of every unbeliever, we will not share the gospel well.

What does an effective gospel encounter look like? A simplified strategy for real-life conversations that allows the Christian to present a powerful apologetic.

Three reasons people don't believe - the reasons people reject Christianity are deep-seated. We'll explore three underlying reasons people today don't believe: self, scientism, and sex.

We are believers because - and only because - Jesus descended into the darkness to rescue us and bring us into the light. There are many people all around us living in darkness, but He left us here to spread the good news of "the Light of the World". We are His ambassadors (2 Corinthians 5:20). Let's equip ourselves to go out and be the best ambassadors we can be, engaging in conversations with family, friends, and strangers in a confident manner that attracts them to Jesus.

And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.

JOHN 3:19

This conference is just the beginning of a concerted effort to equip those who call The Bible Chapel their home church. We are on an exciting journey, and there's more to come! I look forward to seeing you at the conference in September.



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CONFERENCE, SCAN THE QR CODE!



JOE MELARAGNO

LET'S
TALK

Small Groups

At The Bible Chapel, we believe that life is better together.

While weekend services are a powerful time of worship and teaching, true spiritual growth often happens in smaller, more personal settings. That's where Small Groups come in.

Small Groups are places where people can build meaningful relationships, study God's Word, pray for one another, and walk through life side by side. No matter your background or where you are in your faith journey, with more than 90 Small Groups, there's a group for you.

Heading up Small Groups here at the South Hills Campus is Jay Belcher, our Director of Adult Ministries. We talked with Jay about Small Groups, discipleship, and getting connected here at TBC.

Before we dive into ministry, could you share a bit about your journey and what brought you to TBC?

I've been on staff at the Chapel for about six years. I started here as the Director of Facilities and then moved over into the ministry side. I've been married to my wonderful wife, Shelly, for 28 years. We have two college-age daughters. Our home is complete with two dogs and four ducks.

I went to school for engineering, but didn't care for a desk job. I spent about 20 years self-employed in real estate and construction. I've been around the church my whole adult life, serving in various volunteer roles. At TBC, I served in Chapel Students, Connections, Vacation Bible School, and Helping Hands before I came on staff. Currently, I'm in seminary at Liberty University.

You're involved in quite a few different areas here; what does your day-to-day look like as Director of Adult Ministries?

I oversee all things Adult Ministry, which are several distinct areas. I oversee Men's and Women's Ministry with the help of two extremely faithful and dedicated folks: Dave Shields, our Pastor of Men's Ministry and Care, and Laura Ankrom, our

Every Small Group has its own unique feel, but there are a few major distinctions.

Director of Women's Ministry. I work with Small Groups, our Sage Ministry (age 60+), and spiritual development classes. I'm also currently leading our Young Adult Ministry on Monday nights.

What was your first experience with a Small Group like, and how did that lead you to eventually heading them up?

I've been in and around Small Groups for about 20 years. My wife and I were part of a group of families at a prior church who launched a group to help us get better connected. We quickly found we loved talking faith and doing life with all our Small Group friends. Several of the couples who were part of that group are still close friends to this day.

At the Chapel, we were part of the Relevant Faith conference in 2020 and launched a Small Group directly after the event. Shelly and I have been Small Group leaders ever since. When I moved into vocational ministry, heading up Small Groups was an easy fit.

We often hear that life is better together. From your perspective, why should someone seriously consider joining a Small Group?

Small Groups are a fantastic way to get connected and go deeper in your faith. I recommend everyone get involved. I always tell people, 'The Bible Chapel is a big place; it's easy to disappear here if that's what you want. But if you're ready to get serious about your faith, it's also a great place to get more engaged.' I think the best ways to grow in connection are through serving roles and in Small Groups. Serving is a great way to meet folks, but Small Groups are a great way to meet folks and grow in your faith. Groups are about community, discipleship, and care.

Small Groups are a fantastic way to get connected and go deeper in your faith.

Can you tell us about a time where being a part of a Small Group impacted or supported your family?

Our family has hosted Neighborhood VBS since the start - Shelly and I love it, and our daughters love it even more! Over the years, our Small Group has come along side us, and many of them are part of that team now, too. Couples from our group are running games or taking photos, some have children who volunteer with us, and others send their younger kids to hear the Gospel in our backyard. Watching that happen each June is the highlight of our summer.

For someone new to Small Groups, how are the groups structured, and what can they expect when they show up?

Every Small Group has its own unique feel, but there are a few major distinctions. The first is Community vs. Core Groups. Community Groups review the sermon from the prior weekend and talk about applying what was taught. If you were in church, you are ready to attend. Core Groups go a bit deeper (following a curriculum), often with some homework. It might be a topical study or a deeper dive into a book of the Bible. Core Groups tend to be more close-knit, whereas Community Groups are great options for coming and going. All groups take time to pray for one another.

We have men-only, women-only, and mixed groups. Some meet in homes, some meet at the church. Groups meet regularly, which means every week for some, twice a month for others. A group has anywhere from 4 to 12 members. Some groups are life-stage-based (e.g., married with kids), while others are a mix of life stages.

What are the first steps for someone ready to get plugged into a group this ministry year?

I thought you'd never ask! We do a big launch in the fall of each year, where all groups open up for membership. Sign-up starts in mid-August and rolls into September, but we have group opportunities year-round; it's just that there are fewer options than at launch.

This is all great info! As we look toward the fall launch, is there anything else people should keep on their radar?

Yes, one more thing - we are always looking to grow our Small Group ministry. If you have any interest in leading a group, we'd love to talk to you more about that. Catch me around the church sometime, or drop us a line at groups@biblechapel.org.

There are two main types of Small Groups at our South Hills Campus:

Community Groups are relationship-building groups that meet to work out how to apply Sunday's message through discussion questions, prayer, and encouragement. You can join an open Community Group at any time throughout the year. They are your easy on-ramp to finding community here at TBC.

Core Groups are discipleship-focused groups that come together to pursue spiritual transformation as they venture through biblically rich curriculum. Core Groups launch each fall and are closed for one year. Find others looking to go and grow deeper in a Core Group at TBC.

Both types of groups are made up of approximately 4-12 people who come together to grow in their relationships with God and others while living out our five values: **word, worship, connect, serve, and share.**



Getting started is easy
- scan the QR code, and click on the green 'JOIN A SMALL GROUP' button!



JAY BELCHER



**What the world couldn't give,
no, it can't take away
Sorrow may come but it can't
Steal my joy**

**CAN'T
STEAL
MY JOY**

SONG BY JOSIAH QUEEN

**In the high highs, in the low lows
You fill my cup, You fill it up until it overflows
I remember, I'll keep holding on to hope
'Cause you're the King of rolling stones**

**CAN'T STEAL MY JOY
CAN'T STEAL MY JOY**

**What the world couldn't give,
no, it can't take away
Sorrow may come but it can't
Steal my joy**

no no no

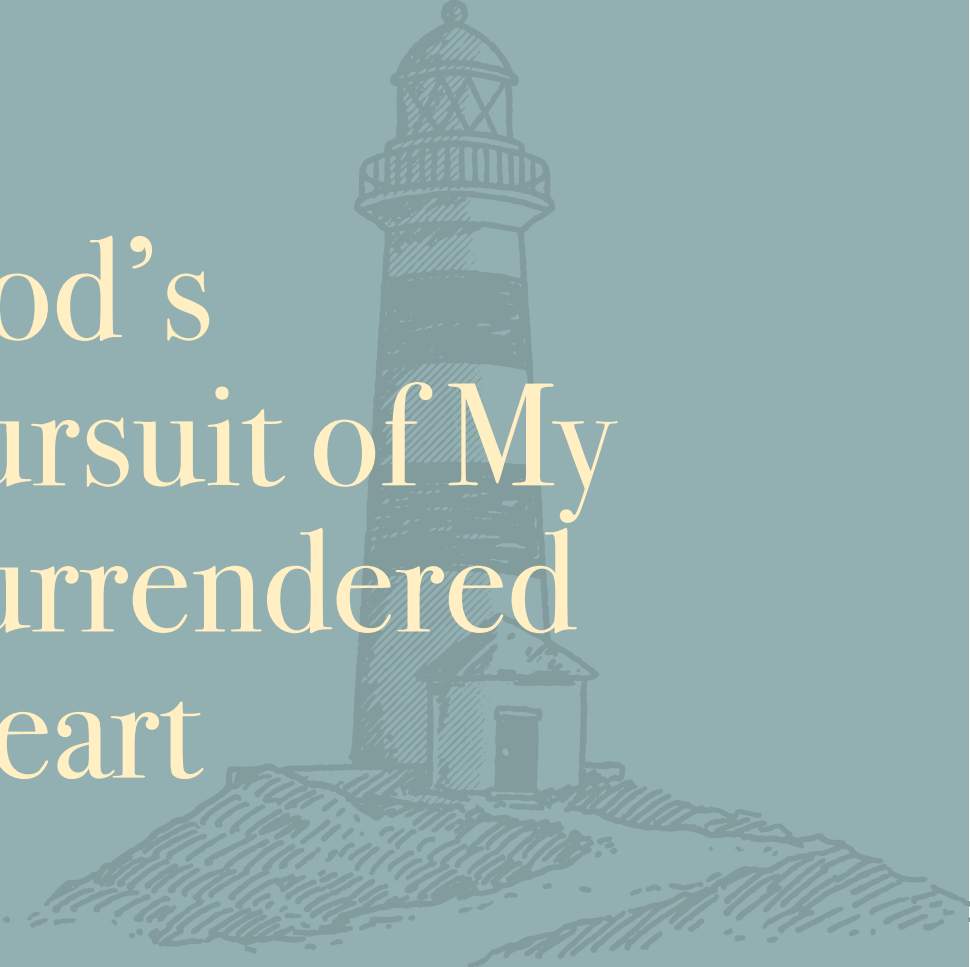
Section 03

Community Connection

**BE THE
LIGHT**

03





God's Pursuit of My Surrendered Heart

Summer Picnic



COMMUNITY CONNECTION



By Laurie Donovan,
Creative Arts Coordinator

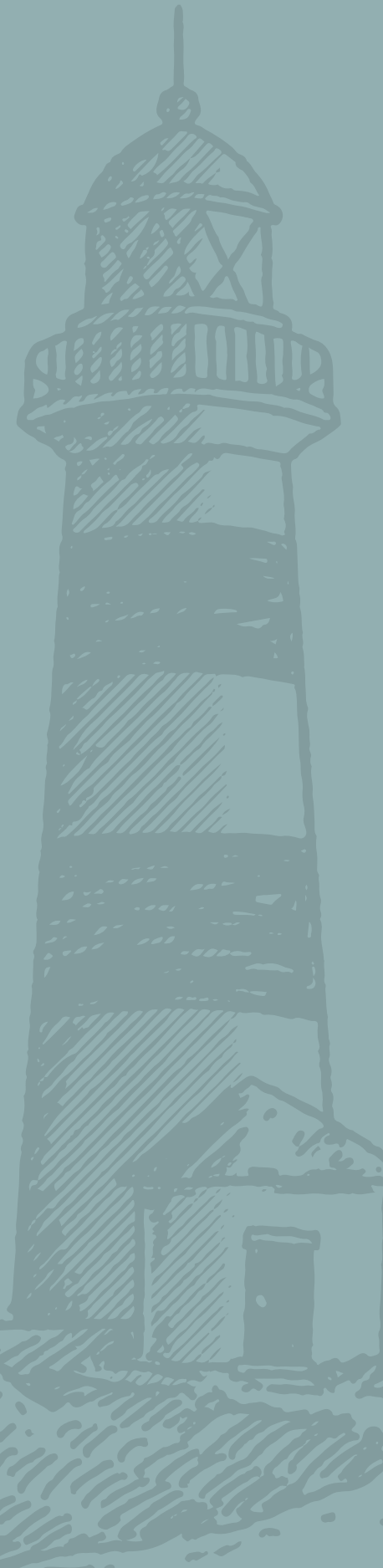
God's Pursuit of My Surrendered Heart

Our heart can only reflect God's love and make a God-sized impact on our community if He has 100% of our heart. There is a difference between accepting our Savior and relinquishing complete control of our hearts.

Is it possible to go through life as a believer, seeking God's will for our lives, praying, and reading the Bible daily and doing all the "Christian things" and never fully relinquish the keys to our heart? YES, because I lived it.

I gave my life to Christ many years ago. I remember the day, the exact spot I was sitting in at church and the tear-filled prayer I prayed with my mom. That day, I accepted Jesus as my Savior, and He filled my heart with His Spirit, and I have no doubts that I will live with Him forever one day in Heaven.

That was a good day, a defining Sunday BUT then Monday came. Daily life happened, and I quickly fell into the routine of the "here and now." While my soul was secure, my daily mindset remained tethered to my own control. I did not realize that becoming a believer did not protect me from a daily battle of aligning my head with my heart. Looking back, I can see how easy it was to confuse belief with surrender. As long as life stayed manageable, I did not have to confront the places where fear still lived in my heart. It was only when I lost my sense of comfort that I began to see what I had been avoiding.



I found myself questioning God's promises, convinced that evil and suffering held the upper hand. God already knew those fears were there. He simply needed me to see them so I would finally let them go. In that moment of total helplessness, where I had zero control, He met me. As my sweet Mom transitioned from this life to her heavenly home, the fear was replaced by peace so perfect it could only have come from my Savior.

I felt the fullness of His love because I finally had nothing left to hold onto but Him. I understood on another level why God wants our whole heart. Only He can provide comfort for today and hope for tomorrow.

Psalm 73:26 "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."

We hear all the time that God wants our heart. Why our heart? The Bible tells us that our heart is the center of our emotions - it is how we make choices, it is where we feel fear and pain. Our heart is also a place where we can feel love, joy, and peace.

The Bible explains our heart as being the center of all things and a center part of human existence. **Proverbs 4:23 states, "Above all else, guard your heart for everything you do flows from it."**

To "guard" our heart means to be intentional about what we allow to shape it, influence it, and take root within it. When fear, control, or other things are left unexamined, they quietly direct how we respond to life and to others. But when we invite God to fully inhabit our heart, allowing Him to refine and lead it, everything that flows from us begins to reflect Him; our words, our responses, our love, and our service. Guarding our heart is ultimately an act of surrender, choosing daily to let God be the one who shapes what pours out of our lives.

What does all of this mean in relation to reflecting God's love and making an impact in our community? When we allow God to fully reside in our heart, and we wholeheartedly want to shine His light, it stands out to others around you. God's greatest desire for us is to be more like Him. A life seeking to reflect God's love chooses to unite and not divide, it chooses to encourage and build up, it chooses to reach out to your neighbors during difficult times, it chooses to sit with a grieving friend even when it's uncomfortable for us, it chooses to pray for not only the victims in a devastating crime but also to pray for the accused, it chooses kindness and love every time.

When we allow God to transform our hearts fully, it changes how we treat others, it creates a desire to serve others, and our perspective becomes more focused on reflecting the love of God.

Jesus wants our hearts - He wants our whole hearts - He desires to shine through us in our communities, to our neighbors, to our families, and everyone we come into contact with. When we fully surrender, even the places marked by fear, control, and uncertainty, He meets us there with love and truth. A heart wholly given to Him becomes a vessel for His light, reflecting His compassion, peace, and grace. This is how Jesus shines through us.



LET'S HOST A

Summer Picnic

There is something timeless about an outdoor summer picnic - the smell of the grill, the golden hour sun, and the sound of laughter in the backyard. It's the quintessential summer experience, but it's also a beautiful opportunity to open your heart and share your faith with your neighbors.

To help you host with ease, we've gathered everything you need: scan the QR code for our curated summer playlist, find a simple prayer on the following pages to bless your gathering, use our conversation starters to break the ice, and have fun in the kitchen trying a few tride and true summer recipes. We hope you have the best time hosting your summer picnic!



Crock-Pot Mac n' Cheese

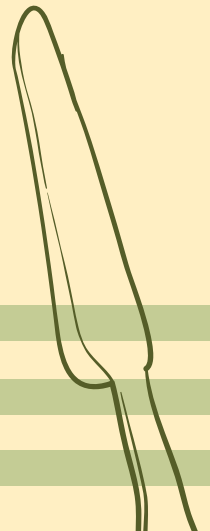
Recipe by Noah Pak

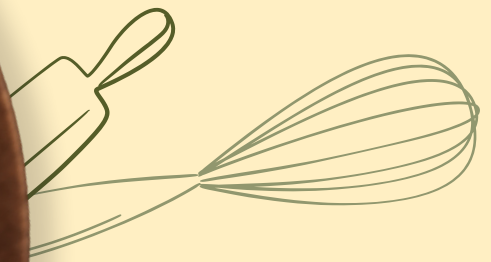
Ingredients

- 16 oz elbow macaroni pasta
- 4 tbsp melted butter
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cans (12 oz) evaporated milk
- 2 cups milk
- 4 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 16 oz Velveta cheese (cut into 1 inch squares)
- 2 tsp salt

Directions

1. Cook macaroni to "al dente".
2. Strain and place in crockpot.
3. Add oil and melted butter. Mix.
4. Add rest of ingredients and mix.
5. Cover crockpot and turn to "low".
6. Cook for 2 hours. Stir after first hour.





Flourless Chocolate Cake (gluten free)

Recipe by Elise Ahlbrand

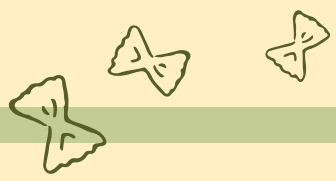
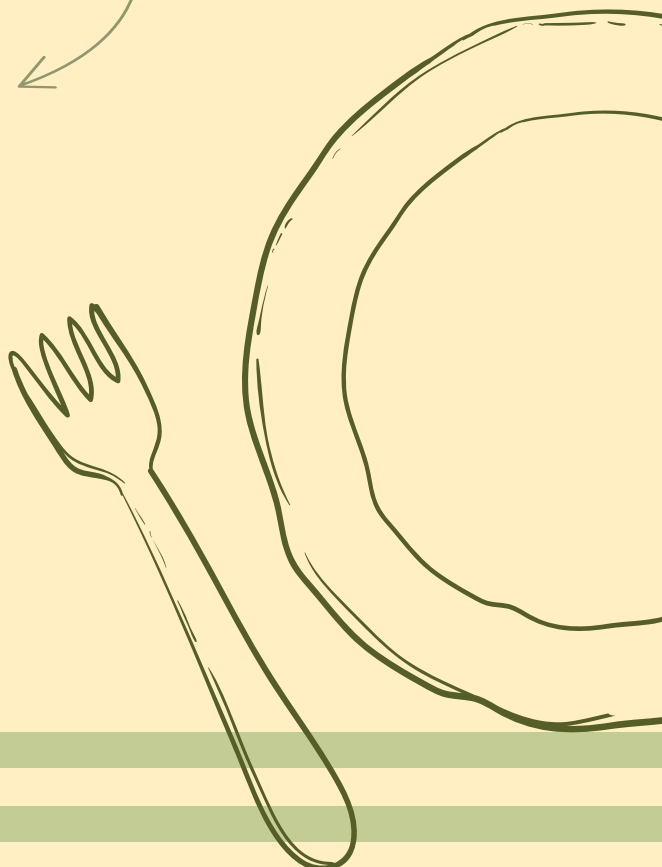
Ingredients

- 1/2 cup water
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 16 oz bittersweet chocolate
- 1 cup salted butter
- 6 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract



Directions

1. Preheat the oven to **300 degrees** and grease a 10-inch springform pan.
2. In a medium saucepan, stir together the water, sugar, and salt. Add the chocolate and butter, and set over medium-low heat, stirring until the chocolate and butter are completely melted.
3. Whisk the eggs in a separate bowl. Slowly mix the chocolate mixture into the eggs, mixing constantly until well blended.
4. Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Bake for 45 minutes or until it is almost set. Let cool completely.
5. Remove the outside ring of the springform pan, and refrigerate the cake until chilled.
6. Enjoy by itself or with a chocolate ganache, whipped cream and raspberries, or a buttercream frosting!



Ice-Breakers

1. What is your favorite summer memory?
2. What is the "correct" way to roast a marshmallow? Golden brown or on fire and charred?
3. What was your favorite neighborhood game to play outside when you were a kid?
4. What has been the biggest "win" of your week so far?
5. What is one thing about this season of your life that you are particularly thankful for right now?

Margherita Flatbread Pizza

Recipe by Rick Butor

Ingredients

1 naan bread
3 pieces fresh mozzarella cheese
(1/2 inch thick)
1 tomato (sliced as thin as possible)
5 leaves basil
1 tsp dry garlic powder
1.5 tbsp olive oil
1.5 tbsp balsamic vinegar
salt & pepper to taste

Directions

1. Mix garlic powder with the olive oil. Brush the flatbread with oil & garlic with half the mixture. Place in preheated to **350 degrees** oven for 5 minutes to crisp up.
2. Remove from oven and place cheese on top of the flatbread, sprinkle with salt & pepper, then place tomatoes on top and repeat with a sprinkling of salt & pepper. Place back in the oven for another 5 minutes
3. Mix the remaining oil & garlic with the balsamic vinegar, stirring until well combined. Chop 5-6 basil leaves.
4. Once flatbread pizza is baked and the edges are golden in color, remove from the oven, drizzle with balsamic vinegar mixture, sprinkle with basil leaves, slice and serve and enjoy!

Heavenly Father, we praise you for the opportunity to gather here today - to be in community with one another. We know it's no accident that each of us are here; You made it so. And Lord, we ask that you bless our time together. We know that life pulls us in many directions, but to take time to pause, be together, laugh, and enjoy each other's company - it's priceless. We praise you and thank you for the wonderful time we know that we'll share tonight. In your precious name we pray, **Amen.**

PRAYER

Barbeque Beef

Recipe by Danielle Hamel

Ingredients

- 1 chuck roast
- 3 peppers (red, yellow, orange)

Sauce Recipe:

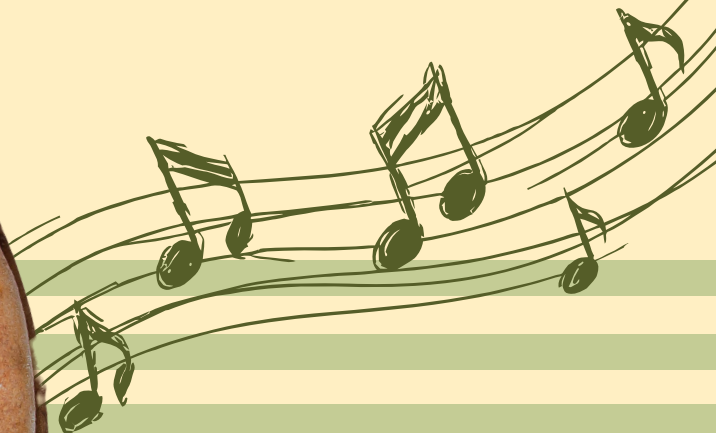
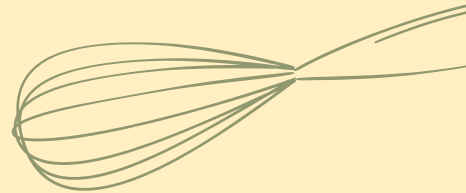
- 1 cup ketchup
- 1 cup water (or juice from roast)
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire
- 1/4 cup white vinegar
- 1 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp mustard

Directions

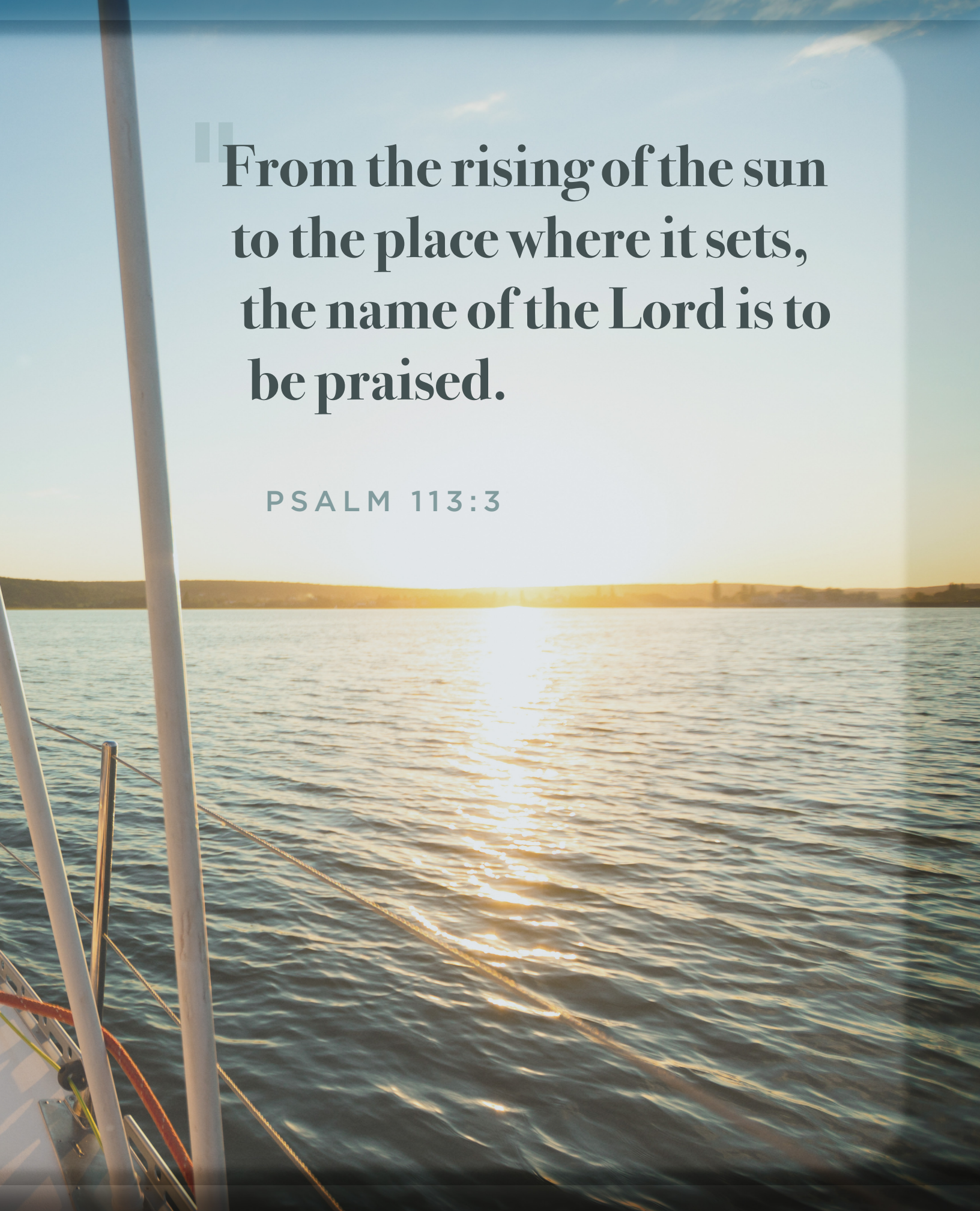
- Beef:** Place the ingredients in a roaster pan. Cover with water, place the lid on, and roast in an oven at **300 degrees** for 3-4 hours. Once done, remove beef from roaster. Let cool. Shred beef and discard any fat.
- Sauce:** Heat all of this to a boil, and then simmer for 30 minutes. Add the shredded beef. Double the sauce recipe if you are making more than 3 lbs of meet.
- Serve on your favorite roll.

Summer Picnic Playlist

We curated a playlist to help set the tone for your night! Scan here to download it now!





A photograph of a sunset over a body of water, taken from the perspective of someone on a boat. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright, shimmering path of light across the water's surface. The sky is a mix of soft orange and pale blue. In the foreground, the white mast and rigging of the boat are visible on the left side. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

**From the rising of the sun
to the place where it sets,
the name of the Lord is to
be praised.**

PSALM 113:3



Mission Trips

At The Bible Chapel, our Outreach Ministries provide opportunities for us to impact Christ in our neighborhoods and throughout the world.



In Matthew 28:19, Jesus says, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” and it’s through this teaching that we adopted **GO • SEND • PRAY!**

We’re so excited about the work God is doing through our ministries. We ask you to come alongside us and alongside people near and far who need the help and hope of Christ.



MAY 28 | 10 AM - 2 PM
ROOM 210

BLOOD DRIVE

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
BIBLECHAPEL.ORG/OUTREACH



Here are our upcoming mission trips!

Spain
JULY 3-11

Kenya
JULY 10-19

Women's Panama
SEPTEMBER 30 - OCTOBER 6

Scan below to learn how you can go, send, pray!





More than a Mission Trip:

BUILDING A LEGACY IN SPAIN

By Cheryl Colussy

Spain is thought to be one of the most secular - if not the most secular - countries in Europe.

Spain was once a country that embraced Christianity, but is now a place where evangelical Christianity is seen as a cult. Most Spaniards do not attend church, know little or nothing about the Bible or Jesus, and don't even know anyone who is a Christian.

Making inroads for the gospel there has taken many years of faithful ministry. The Bible Chapel began partnering with Ken and Carolyn Muckle back in 1997 when they first started their ministry there. The Muckles prayed for many years for a national couple to partner with them in this work,

and God wonderfully answered that prayer with Federico (Fede) and Lucia Alvarez.

Fede and Lucia met at seminary, which "just so happened" to be the same seminary where Ken taught for many years. After graduating from seminary, the Alvarazes moved to Cabanillas del Campo in 2009 and began partnering with the Muckles in church planting. These two couples worked faithfully together over the next 14 years to establish a church and make disciples, until Ken and Carolyn retired in 2023.

Fede serves as the pastor of the church, and Lucia leads the children and youth ministries,

teaches women's Bible studies, and more. Together, they patiently shepherd the people of the church in every aspect of life.

Most of the members of the church are **first-generation** Christians, which means they grew up with no understanding of God and Jesus and no foundation of Christian teachings and principles. This is one of the greatest challenges in leading the church. It is a work from the

"Spain is thought to be one of the most secular countries in Europe."



ground up. Much of the work involves teaching people the foundational truths of scripture, ministering to them in the brokenness of their pasts, and discipling them to live lives that honor the Lord. Because the church does not have many mature, grounded Christians, most of the shepherding of the church members falls on the loving and faithful shoulders of Fede and Lucia.

Presently, the church meets in a one-room storefront that is not even as large as our church's bookstore. Thankfully, the church was able to purchase an old restaurant building a couple of years ago, just a block away from where they meet now.

It is currently under renovation, but when it is completed, it will be five times the size of their present location. We praise God that The Bible Chapel was able to donate substantial funds toward the renovations. This new building will be a tremendous blessing to the church because it will allow for expanded ministry and future growth to take place. But right now, both of these are being hampered by a lack of space.

Much of the church's growth is due to the youth group's growth. Because the Alvarez children are such kind and caring young people, many teenagers want to be their friends. And because they are so obedient and respectful towards their parents, many parents in Cabanillas want their children to be friends with them, too. What a powerful testimony they have simply by obeying God's instruction - children obey their parents! For the past several years, the church has held two weeks of evangelistic summer camps, one week for children and one week for teens. Last year, The Bible Chapel sent a team to help Fede and Lucia with their teen camp, and all of us who went were tremendously blessed by it.

An interesting fact we learned last year is that Spaniards work and save their money all year so they can go on "holiday" for a couple of weeks in July and August. Going on holiday is the most important thing in their entire year. Spaniards absolutely could not understand why a group of people would spend

their precious vacation time and their hard-earned money to go somewhere and work. So when our team showed up to do just that, many people asked us, "WHY would you do this?" This gave us a wonderful open door to say, "Because God loves you and we came all this way to tell you that God loves you." So even before we "did" anything, the **"ministry of presence"** was already at work. Just making the effort to show up in their lives was a powerful testimony of the Lord's love for them.

It is a work from the ground up.

Because the Spanish young people wanted to learn American football, or "American rugby," as they call it, last year's team brought flag football supplies and taught the teens how to play it. They loved it, and it was a huge success! This is a great example that God can use anything for His purposes, even football!

The Bible Chapel is sending another team to help with the teen camp again this July. We will be helping with games, crafts, and food. And on the weekend, we will be holding an English Conversation Outreach as well.

Even though this year's team has already been formed, you can still be a part of the support team through your financial and prayer support. If you feel led to contribute financially, you may do so by visiting biblechapel.org/international and selecting the "Spain Trip 2026" option.



If you speak Spanish and want to use that God-given ability to encourage Fede and Lucia in their ministry and be a part of what God is doing in Spain, you can join their Zoom Impact Prayer Group every third Thursday from 6:00-7:00 PM. **To register, scan the QR code.**

And lastly, we encourage you to prayerfully consider being part of next year's team. The trip typically takes place in early July, and we would love for you to experience firsthand what God is doing in Spain.



Next Steps

Discover TBC

If you're newer to the church and would like to learn more about who we are, what we believe, ways to get involved, and more, join us at Discover TBC! We hope to see you there!

JUNE 7

JULY 5

AUGUST 2



GIVING

We believe that giving is a part of worship, and thanks to your generous giving, our ministries are able to continue to share the Good News and show how Jesus transforms lives.



LET'S CONNECT

We want to help you stay connected! Be sure to sign up for our weekly congregational email.



QUESTIONS?

We would love to hear from you!



Do you have a prayer or care need?
We are here for you.





Isaiah 64:8

YET YOU, LORD, ARE
OUR FATHER. WE ARE
THE CLAY, YOU ARE THE
POTTER; WE ARE ALL THE
WORK OF YOUR HAND.



FALL 2026 COMING SOON



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