

The Sentinel

WE
STAND
WATCH

DISTRIBUTED BY EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH



February, 2026
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Fish and Loaves

By Pastor Troy Bassham

One of the most amazing miracles in Jesus's ministry (*at least in my opinion*) is the multiplication of the fish and the loaves.

After a day of listening to Jesus teach, the crowd was hungry. Having traveled out of the cities into the countryside, there were very few food options. There wasn't a shawarma stand, kosher mini-mart, or a McDavid's restaurant nearby*.

The only food to be found belonged to a young boy who had five small loaves of bread and two fish. And yet, this food, given to Jesus, was multiplied to feed a crowd of over 5,000 people with leftovers to spare.

What Can We Learn?

What can we learn from this episode—one of the only miracles to appear in all four Gospels? Certainly, we see God's power on display. He does not

need our assistance or our resources in order to sustain us or accomplish His purposes. In **Isaiah 40:25 (NASB)**, God declares, **"To whom then will you compare Me that I would be his equal?"**

Also, we see the willingness of a young boy to share his lunch with Jesus. Placed in the Master's hands, this small lunch became a **huge blessing**.



An Impression!

Undoubtedly, this miracle made an impression on the disciples as well as the multitude that was fed. But, I have often wondered of the impact that it had on the lad. His participation was forever written into

→ Please see "Fish & Loaves" on page 2.

Looking Inside ...

- Keeping Good Company 3
- Office Update 4
- Dear EBC Family 4
- New in the EBC Library 5
- Weekday School of the Bible . . . 6
- Weekday Fundraiser 7
- YOUR Board of Elders 8
- (Annual) Meeting Highlights . . . 9
- Church Flowers 10
- News from FEBC! 11
- The Right Approach 12
- Women's Conference Info . . . 13
- Mom to Mom: Making Connections 14
- 2026 Men's Ministry Events . . . 15
- FLIERS: Sunday Sch Classes . . . 16
- Awana Store 17
- Start Your Engines 17
- Steve and Mikki Schmidt 18
- Ongoing Shoebox Collection . . 20
- Stories from the Fields 21
- Missionaries EBC Supports . . . 22
- Calendar & Prod. Info . . . Back Pg

Deadline for the March, 2026 ISSUE is:

Monday, February 23, 2026
@ 5:00 pm!

know. grow. go.



Fish & Loaves

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(Continued from page 1.)

Scripture. His gift is remembered by us still.

The Concept of Stewardship

These past few weeks, I have been preaching on the concept of stewardship. The Bible, in **James 1:17 (NASB)**, reminds us that **“every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights.”**

Too often we mistake what God has given us as the ultimate gift instead of recognizing that using what He has given us for His honor and Holy usage is an even greater blessing.

It is God who gives us our talents and treasures, even our lives and very being. **God gives us** good things to enjoy (**1 Timothy 6:17**) *but also to use for His good purposes.* Too often we mistake what God has given us as the ultimate gift instead of recognizing that using what He has given us for His honor and Holy usage is an even greater blessing.

Giving Back to God

Throughout Scripture we see a principle that we are called to give back to God. There are multiple reasons for this.

One reason is to express our gratitude. We can do this by giving a portion of what God has gifted us back to Him. In a sense, it is like a small child “buying” a present for his parents at Christmas. Having no personal wealth or income, it is usually the other parent who is paying the bill. And yet, the experience can bring such joy to the child who gets to bless a parent.

Giving back to God is also a way to show trust in Him instead of the things that He has given us. Sadly, when God is generous to us, we can fall into the error of relying on the gift instead of the Giver.

Modeling God's Heart

Giving also is a way to model the heart of God. God is generous and has joy in giving. As we grow to resemble His holy character, we, too, find joy in blessing those that we love, even at personal expense. As we come to value the things that God values, we find fulfillment in using our talents and treasures for something important and impactful instead of squandering all of our resources on passing pleasures or foolish trinkets.

Not An Easy Concept...

The concept of stewardship can take time to grasp. God does not ask us to give because He needs anything from us. We are called to give because it is good for us. It is a way that we show love and honor. God is worthy of the highest honor. And so, Scripture reminds us that giving back to God is an act of worship.



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I could go on, but I'll stop here for now. There will be more to come on Sunday mornings. I hope that you enjoy the series on stewardship. It is not meant to bring about a guilt-ridden response.

I am preaching this series because it is a Biblical concept and because, *I believe*, a proper understanding of stewardship will help us to grow in faith, joy, and maturity. Remember that the gifts that God values are freely given and **not** given under compulsion (**2 Corinthians 9:6-57**) *or* to enlarge our own reputations (**Matthew 6:1-4**).

Be Like the Child...

I hope we can be like the boy who offered his lunch to Jesus and the disciples—and that our gifts and service will be humbly and sincerely given. In doing so, we will more closely resemble our Savior's heart.

Who knows in what ways we might see God do amazing things through the simple things we place in His hands? †

*Clearly, there were not fast-food restaurants in 1st century Galilee. Although there was actually an Israeli restaurant named McDavid's in the 1980s and 90s.



Keeping Good Company

By Greg Sykora

“Show me your five closest friends and I’ll show you your future.”



This is a saying of the world that tends to be pretty accurate. The reason it’s pretty accurate is because it is actually fairly similar to a lot of the Proverbs,

which are 100% true as the inspired Word of God. The Bible gives us multiple warnings to avoid letting unbelievers corrupt you into sin. It’s best to avoid having those living in sin as your closest friends.

Proverbs 13:20 (NKJV) says, *“He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed.”*

Proverbs 22:24–25 (NKJV) tells us, *“Make no friendship*

with an angry man, and with a furious man do not go, lest you learn his ways and set a snare for your soul.”

Proverbs 16:29 (NKJV) warns us, *“A violent man entices his neighbor, and leads him in a way that is not good.”*

Proverbs 28:7 (NKJV) says, *“Whoever keeps the law is a discerning son, but a companion of gluttons shames his father.”*

Avoid Bad Company!

If we keep the company of sinners, they are very likely to lead us to sin. Their peer pressure can cause us to sin. We should avoid keeping company with sinners to the point where they are in our sphere of influence and causing us to sin, no matter how charismatic and fun they are. Even if they don’t pressure us to sin, constant exposure to sin can result in our sinning. Lot’s children are a good example of this. Lot’s children grew up around sin and when they were older, they sinned... probably not a coincidence.

Called to Reach Out

We are called by Jesus to reach out to sinners to tell them the Gospel of Christ. This means we should have contact with sinners in order to share the love and truth of Christ. When sharing the Gospel of Christ with nonbelievers, we do need some



“The righteous should choose his friends carefully, for the way of the wicked leads them astray.”

kind of relationship with the person. We should also be careful that our closest friends are not sinners leading us to sin.

Personally, I think a good question to ask ourselves is, *“How many of my five closest friends are followers of*

→ Please see *“Friends”* on page 5.



Office Update

By Alison Johnson
EBC Office Manager



Pixabay

January was a jam packed, wild ride for the office, but we made it through. February tends to be a little less intense, but **Kari** is taking a much needed break. So there are two Fridays that the office will be **closed:**



February 6 and February 13. Other than that, we will be business as usual.

Other than that, we will be business as usual.

Website Updates

I have spent a lot of time working on updating the website including



events, the annual devotional, and more. If you have things you want to see or ideas, let me know. I am open to more ideas. I can be creative-ish, but it is not my spiritual gift so please do not hesitate to ask.

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Pixabay

90s Club

The new 90s Club book should be out in February. The new directory is getting all the edits we have received put in and will be sent to the volunteer editors. I hope to have them in your hands by March.

Directory Updates

Thank you to everyone that stopped by, emailed, or called with your directory updates. That really helped this daunting project go so much smoother. ✝

Dear EBC Family,

It is with mixed emotions that we write this letter, communicating our intent to move. Mariah and I have decided that it is time for our family to leave the Dallas area and move to southern Oregon to be



near both sides of our family. We have many things yet to do before moving, some of which include finishing out the school year in youth ministry, co-leading the Thailand mission trip with Lori, and getting our house on the market and sold. Therefore, we will not be moving until August, 2026.

We want to communicate this decision to you now because we are sure in our decision and we want to give EBC time to find a new youth pastor without a long intermission for the sake of the church and the ministry. This decision has not come lightly since we have immensely enjoyed our years at EBC, but we believe this will be best for our family, and that God will provide good opportunities in pastoral ministry for me down south. I have begun applying for pastoral jobs but have not yet solidified a new role; please pray for us to have patience and trust in God during this process.

Please know that Mariah and I are so grateful for the time you have allowed us to be here. I look back dumbfounded that so many of you were willing to take a chance on an inexperienced 22-year-old, not even out of college, but I am glad you did! We have both learned so much here at this church and have been so blessed by your support and love.

“Thank you” is too small a sentiment to share for such a wonderful congregation and body of believers. We love you and appreciate you greatly.

In Christ,

The Wheelers ✝



New in the EBC Library

February 2026

Fiction

What a Wave Must Be by **Angela Hunt**

The Emissaries series by **Angela Hunt**

The Daughter of Rome (3)

Lake City Heroes series by **Lynette Eason**

Serial Burn (3)

The Pharisee's Wife by **Janette Oke**

The Outer Banks series by **Davis Bunn**

Fortunate Harbor (1)

Women of Midtown series by **Elizabeth Camden**

When Stars Light the Sky (2)

Queen Esther's Court series by **Tessa Afshar**

The Royal Artisan (2)

Timeless series by **Gabrielle Meyers**

When the Day Comes (1)

In This Moment (2)



For a Lifetime (3)
Across the Ages (4)
Every Hour Until Then (5)
Through Each Tomorrow (6)

The Jewels of Kalispell series by **Tracie Peterson**

The Heart's Choice (1)
Each Tomorrow (2)
An Unexpected Grace (3)

Home to Green Creek by **Lauraine Snelling**

At Morning's Light (2)

DVDs

Amazing Grace: The Untold Story

The Forge

The Star of Bethlehem Revealed

Non-Fiction

The End: Everything You'll Want to Know About the Apocalypse by **Mark Hitchcock** (Pastor Troy's recommendation) †



Friends

← (Continued from page 3.)

Christ?" If the answer isn't four or five, there's a chance that you are keeping company with sinners.

When I first became a Christian, only two of my closest friends were Christians. I shared Christ with the other three many times, and unfortunately, they refused Christ and continued to lead a life of sin. Once I stopped keeping company with those three, *there was a lot less sin in my life.*

Choose Friends Carefully!

Proverbs 12:26 (NKJV) reflects my experience very well, "***The righteous should choose his friends carefully, for the way of the wicked leads them astray.***"

Let's surround ourselves with wise friends who will build us up into stronger Christians, as iron sharpens iron.

Greg †



Weekday School of the Bible



Weekday School of the Bible is a released time program for public school students. This ministry gives public school students the opportunity to learn about the Bible, the Gospel, and Jesus during the school day every week.

Our teachers are drawn from the Dallas youth pastors and other qualified teachers. Weekday Bible maintains five chapels, one near each of the main public schools in Dallas. The close ties between the Dallas Ministerial Association and Weekday Bible have enabled a great witness to God's work here in Dallas. Anyone wishing to learn more about the general nature of these programs can visit:

<https://www.releasedtime.org/>



Termination Notice

In June 2025 Weekday Bible was given notice of termination of the lease for the LaCreole Middle School Chapel lot. At that time we were not quite meeting our monthly budget and had increased our fundraising efforts. We decided to attempt to purchase the lot for the LaCreole Chapel and doubled down on our fundraising efforts.

After discussions with the Methodist Church, who want to sell the lot, and the City of Dallas, we have agreed on a price of \$95,000 for the lot. With closing costs and the cost of directly hooking the building to the City water, we are right at \$100,000 for the initial purchase.

City Plans

The City plans to improve SE Academy with an expected cost to Weekday Bible of between \$15,000 and \$25,000. The donations have reached \$120,000 as of January 6, 2026. We have reached our goal, and **give our thanks first to God** for the amazingly quick response from His people. Secondly, **we thank all of you who are praying** for this ministry and those who have also donated financially.

Drop-In Center

We continue to wish for and are praying to increase our budget for the after school ministry, the **Drop-In Center**, which takes place in the High School Chapel.

The Drop-In Center is now open Mondays and Wednesdays 3:30 PM

By Rand Dow
Vice President, Weekday Bible

to 6:30 PM for 7th through 12th grades.

Nice Letter!

We received a letter from a LaCreole student on January 2:

1 Peter 5:7
Cast all your anxiety on him because He cares for you.

Weekday Bible, I am 12 years old, and attend Bible Class at LaCreole. I think your cause is great, and you should keep pushing towards Christianity! There are multiple kids I know, where Bible Class (as called by the students) is their only resource to learn About God. Us students NEED this! Most of my friends are scared to tell others about Jesus. Sure, I've been mocked for being a Christian, but I have NEVER regretted it ONCE. I know many people at my church who are all for Weekday Bible!

Continue your cause and Never give up!

Random 12-year old

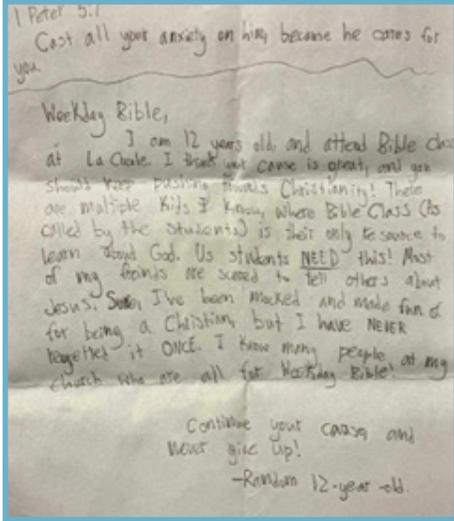
New Staff

At our January meetings we voted in new members of the Executive Committee. We now have **Jeff Anderson**, our new president; he is the youth pastor at Valley Life

→ Please see "Weekday" on page 7.

Weekday

← (Continued from page 6.)



Church. I am the vice president. **Joyce Padilla** is the secretary. **Ruth Jupe** continues as the treasurer and we have **Robert Dow** as the new assistant treasurer. Our new administrator is **Brandy Sharp**.

Our program directors are: **Alicia Bodenhamer**—middle and high schools director; **Trisha Mack**—elementary schools director, and **Andrew Bullock**, the Hub

→ Please see "Weekday" on page 10.



Weekday Fundraiser

By Gwen Griffiths

A 2023 study shows that 72% of adult evangelicals surveyed were saved before age 18.* *What does this tell us?* That reaching children with the gospel message is vital.

Dallas Weekday Bible does just this through release time classes. Students can attend a Bible class each week during their regular school day. Here, every student has the opportunity to hear the message of Jesus's love and the hope He offers.

After reading the article on the previous page, you are aware that Weekday has been working to raise funds that will secure the future of this ministry—purchasing the lot on LaCreole where the middle school Weekday classes meet and working with the city to make required improvements. Even after this project is finished, further needs await funding.

Fundraiser: February 28!

And you can be a part of ensuring that this ministry continues to reach kids during the critical years before age 18.

On February 28, there will be a fundraiser for the Dallas Weekday Bible. **Participation is as easy as not cooking lunch that day.** Instead, arrive at the Youth Center entrance on the west side



of the Evangelical Bible Church in Dallas (1175 Howe Street SE) and pick up a hot meal. Meals will include **pulled pork, potato, and old settler beans, and cost \$15 each.**

Sign Up

Sign up by contacting **Tim or Gwen Griffiths (785.443.2460)**, by scanning the QR code, or by visiting this link: signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4CA8AD23ABF58-61884935-dallas.

Please sign up by noon on Friday, February 27. †



* Infinity Concepts survey: **The Spiritual Journey: How Evangelicals Come to Faith** (<https://www.infinityconcepts.com/the-spiritual-journey-dl/>)

Participation is as easy as not cooking lunch that day.

YOUR Board of Elders



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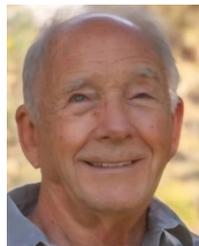
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Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

Acts 20:28 (NIV) †

Annual Congregational Meeting: 1/25/26

Meeting Highlights



From Minutes of the Meeting

The Annual Congregational Meeting was held at EBC on Sunday, January 25. The following are highlights from this gathering.

Trustees:

Bill Voth presented a Trustee report. He recognized **Willard Loewen** and **Jim Walker** for their years of service on the committee. There are not a lot of changes since the last meeting. Upcoming projects include:

- ✘ Making the foyer bathrooms ADA compliant
- ✘ Installing a lift that would reach the basement
- ✘ Painting the exterior doors around the church
- ✘ Repairing the furnace for the sanctuary (*there are 14 furnaces for EBC*)

Additionally, as requests for smaller projects come to the committee, they are evaluated to determine what is most important to keep the church running.



Missions Committee:

Ron Brooks presented the report for the Missions Committee. We have 12 missionaries, one new one, **Matthew Schneider**, and 13 mission agencies that we support. The budget is decreased 5.73% for 2026. They gave a 3.5% increase to the missionaries. They did not increase support for local ministries. Rather, they reduced the Mission Committee expense line items for this year. Specifically, the following lines were reduced:

- ✘ New missionary
- ✘ Special mission projects
- ✘ Short term missions

Treasurer's Report:

Randy Flaming presented the treasurer report on behalf of the Budget Committee. They are concerned about the trajectory of our giving and spending. They strongly encouraged committees to cut back on their projected budgets for this year.

In response to questions on the budget increase for outside accounting, it was stated that that line item is larger to cover an audit or review. This way we can make sure we are in compliance with our bookkeeping practices.

This year's budget is \$112,249 over the giving from last year. The committee conducted a review of revenue and income over the last several years, as well as the projects and changes that took place in those

years. They then reviewed how that relates to the average attendance. Additional discussion focused on how to reach your neighbors and bring more people to Christ and to church.

Prayer Needs

Attendees are asked to pray about bringing in 21 new regular attendees for Sundays this year. Factors for the budget include the following:

- ✘ Continuing ministry support
- ✘ Pastoral staff
- ✘ Office staff
- ✘ Custodial staff
- ✘ Maintenance and repairs
- ✘ Improvements
- ✘ Security systems

All this is to done within the framework of a 3 to 8% annual inflation rate!

We Have Options...

As with any business, churches can balance their budget by either increasing revenue or decreasing expenses. In terms of EBC, the bottom-line is we need to continue the mindset of knowing, growing, and going. *Due to all of this, it is likely the Associate Pastor position won't be filled until July 1.*

→ Please see "Meeting" on page 15.

Church Flowers

By **Gaye Stewart**
 Chairperson, Floral Committee
 503.510.4370
rosesremembered@aol.com

Dear Church Family,

It is the beginning of a new year and time to remind you of the **Flower Order Signup Chart** now available on the wallboard as you enter the Activity Center. It is listed month-by-month with each Sunday of the month.



Make It Even MORE Special

If you have an anniversary, birthday, baby arrival, engagement, or any other special event and wish to acknowledge it

with a special “custom made” floral design, please add your name to the chart for that Sunday. We will talk later about the colors, size, and the special event.

These arrangements will be yours to take home following the second service and payment for the flowers will be made to the designer. You may also bring your own design or a design prepared by another source.



Floral Team

I am pleased to have a floral team comprised of **Kim Disher**, **Carolyn Stent**, plus **Mike Stewart** and **John West** who carry the bouquets from the cooler to the sanctuary.

Sourcing Flowers

It has become more difficult (*and expensive*) to buy fresh flowers in the winter months. During

the summer, Kim and I grow flowers for floral designs which saves budget money and creates more variety! To add to our floral options, we are going to design three silk floral designs to be used in the sanctuary for church services. These will look lovely and give us a needed break periodically.

YOUR Input?

If you have ideas, suggestions, or comments, please share them with us, or better yet, visit the flower room to find us most Friday nights making church flower arrangements from the amazing bounty of God's beauty. †



Weekday

← (Continued from page 7.)

Drop-In program director, he is the youth pastor at Dallas Church.

How YOU Can Help

Anyone looking to help us out can find donation information on the

Weekday Bible web page at <https://weekdaybible.com>, for the post office address for sending checks, or an online donation under the “DONATE” button.

Please keep Weekday School of the Bible in your prayers for the financial means, as well as the ongoing ministry to the school children in Dallas.

Pray for the program administrators, the teachers and assistants, and especially for the children themselves. †



Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches

News from FEBC!

By Kevin Stone
President, FEBC



February 2, 2026

The world is changing rapidly. There are so many incredible developments that it is difficult (*if not impossible*) to keep up. Will there be lasting peace in Gaza? Will the U.S. take over Greenland? Is Canada moving toward China? Will the violence in Minnesota ever end? Will Alberta secede from Canada? Those are just a few outstanding questions, and they don't even cover the longstanding issues of morality, gender, or sanctity of life that we have faced for years.

One-sided news outlets and social media algorithms reinforce a narrow perspective. Viral videos present a situation that happened in seconds, with no information regarding the hours or days leading up to it. AI creates videos that appear convincing but are utterly fake. **Truth is elusive.**

In this murky environment of partial truths, Christians are fighting amongst themselves over issues outside the Church – each side believing that their viewpoint is the only proper way to view the world. It is not just “us” (*believers*) against “them” (*unbelievers*). For instance, I know believers who say, “how could you defend a government that would send out ICE agents to round up people and end up using deadly force against citizens?” I also know believers who say, “how can you defend protecting criminals who entered our country illegally from justice rather than protecting the lives of law enforcement officers?” They both feel that they represent “the” Christian view.

I am not going to try to resolve those questions in this short letter, but here is a quick thought: There is one reliable source of truth, and it is the Bible. What believers need most right now is Biblical literacy (*along with the rest of the armor of God*). I have often seen a well-meaning believer take a verse out of context and apply it to a situation. But when we understand all of Scripture, we are driven to consider certain things more deeply. For instance, the same God who said to turn the other cheek also said that the government has weapons for a reason. We must seek to understand how those truths work together rather than simply picking the one we like best at that moment. I will write further about this topic in my next Fellowship Focus article, so stay tuned for that.



Meanwhile, our Fellowship churches are focused on teaching the whole Bible in their local communities. This work is vitally important, and our Fellowship exists to help them in that effort. Thank you to each church for your commitment to God's Word. Thank you to each of you for your ongoing support, prayer, encouragement, and financial gifts. May God grant us wisdom and discernment in every conversation, and may he be glorified in our communities!

Kevin Stone

President, FEBC ✝

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The Gift of Conflict

The Right Approach

By Gwen Griffiths

So you've found yourself in a place of conflict, and you've realized you need to go quickly and directly to the other person involved. *What now?*

This month, I want to share some thoughts about approaching a person with whom you have conflict—whether you have been hurt by them or done the damage yourself.

The Right Mindset

It's very rare that we have no part in causing hurt in a conflict. At the time you approach someone to resolve a conflict, you might yet not know that some action of yours influenced an action of theirs.



So the first thing is to go with an open mind and heart, ready to listen. **James 1:20 (NLT)** gives practical advice: ***“Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: you must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.”***

As we prepare to approach a difficult conversation, we can spend a few minutes in prayer, asking God to help us be ready to listen, to slow our speech, and to keep our anger (*and defensiveness*) in check.

A Good Approach

A marriage book I've been reading talks about a soft approach when dealing with conflict. This is a way to approach a difficult conversation in a way that opens the other person's heart instead of making them feel defensive.

Try to present the issue as a problem you can work on and solve together. People usually want to grow and to improve their relationships. When we feel like someone is trying to help



us do that, it's easier for us to hear hard things.

If you are the person who has been offended, ask questions. An opening like, *“Hey, I noticed that you seemed resentful when you responded to me the other day. Is there something going on between us that I'm not aware of?”* ***is softer and easier to hear than*** *“You were rude to me and owe me an apology.”* You might also find that you carry some weight in the conflict and need to offer an apology of your own.

If offender, be upfront. Immediately and directly acknowledge your part in the situation instead of beating

→ Please see **“Approach”** on page 13.

Try to present the issue as a problem you can work on and solve together. People usually want to grow and to improve their relationships.



Approach

← (Continued from page 12.)

around the bush. Don't make excuses, and don't try to move the blame from yourself.

A Meaningful Apology

Apologies seem to have so many opportunities to go wrong, creating more conflict instead of resolving it. Here's a couple of things I've learned over the years:

✦ An apology with a "but" in it is just an excuse. When we say, "I'm sorry, but..." we are trying to lay the blame on someone or something else.

✦ Own your own part. Even if you are only responsible for 1% of the problem, admit that 1% of it and apologize for that.

✦ Recognize the impact your actions had on the other person, and tell them what you are going to work on in the future.

Keep Thinking:

✦ *Is your approach to difficult conversations usually "soft" or "hard"? Do you come with a heart of gentleness and peace, or with a "you're wrong and this is what you need to do to fix it" attitude?*

✦ *Is there someone you need to make things right with? What might be the best way to approach them? †*



P L A N T O A T T E N D

— THE —
WORD SPEAKS
Women's Conference 2026

Our Intentional God

SPECIAL SPEAKER

Colleen Searcy



March 6-7, 2026 | Salem Heights Church

www.thewordspeaksconference.com
@thewordspeaks_conference

KEY VERSE: Isaiah 46: 3-4

"Listen to me, house of Jacob, all the remnant of the house of Israel, who have been sustained from the womb, carried along since birth. I will be the same until your old age, and I will bear you up when you turn gray. I have made you, and I will carry you; I will bear and rescue you."

PURPOSE: To champion a *passion* for God and His Word as we learn to trust the *power* of God through His Word.

GOALS:

- To offer sound biblical teaching
- To provide an opportunity to connect with other believing women
- To cheer on a desire for God's Word

SCHEDULE:

Friday Evening

- 5:30-7:00pm - Check in
- 7:00-9:00pm - Session 1
- 9:00pm - Dessert

Saturday Morning

- 8:30am - Doors open
- 8:30-9:30am - Light brunch
- 9:30am-11:30am - Session 2
- 11:30am-12:30pm - Optional workshop
- 11:30am-2:00pm - Lunch on your own

Saturday Afternoon

- 2:00pm - Doors open
- 2:30-4:00pm - Session 3
- 4:00pm - Conference wrap up



By Gwen Griffiths

All through the youth center, women turned to each other and shared. One mentioned a recent loss; another described a hurt she was struggling with. At another table, a young mom shared a triumph in parenting, and the rest of the table celebrated with her.

Loving Life!

At our January 13 meeting, **Kelsey Enszt** spoke to the group on the topic of "How to Love Your Life and Your Kids at the Same Time". During the discussion times, I noticed moms sharing deep feelings and reaching out to comfort or encourage each other. As we moved into prayer, small groups of moms formed all over the room.



Kelsey Enszt shares about loving your life and your kids, even when it seems like both might be a little too much to handle.

This is one of the biggest purposes of Mom to Mom: **connected community.**



Moms used paint chips to represent each member of their families during a craft on January 13.

Key Person: Mentor Moms!

Through the year, each table, led by their mentor mom, builds relationships. Many tables meet in between meetings or after the year is over. Some connect via text or phone calls. Mentor moms pray for requests and offer advice and support.

And this connected community helps our moms in their endeavor. When they feel overwhelmed by the demands of parenting, they can reach out for support. When the struggles of life seem too big to

handle, they point each other to God. And when they have something to celebrate—an upcoming birth, successful potty training, a new hairstyle—they cheer each other on.



Important Ministry

This ministry plays an important role here at EBC and operates only because of a large number of volunteers. *Would you pray for these moms and volunteers, especially on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month?* †



A few moms hold up their completed bookmark, with colors on the back to represent each family member.

Photos on this page by Gwen Griffiths.

This ministry plays an important role here at EBC and operates only because of a large number of volunteers. Would you pray for these moms and volunteers, especially on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month?

Meeting

← (Continued from page 9.)

Our congregation was asked to pray for the following:

- ✦ The Associate Pastor position
- ✦ Increased giving
- ✦ Reaching out to our community

Throughout the budget process, the Elders will be prayerfully watching and evaluating expenses and will be in regular communication with status updates with our various committees. Not only will the Elders and Budget Committee be evaluating the financial impact of possible decisions, but the human impact as well.

Board of Elders

Galen Harms came up and introduced the people on the ballot for the Elder board positions:

- ✦ **Mike Huber**
- ✦ **Jim Peters**
- ✦ **Nat Thomas**
- ✦ **Jim Walker**

Youth Report

Pastor Andrew Wheeler shared his report on the youth ministry. He mentioned that he and **Mariah** are planning to move in August of this year in order to be closer to family. The timing is geared to be at the end of the ministry year and after the Thailand mission trip. Additionally, Pastor Andrew has been doing some teaching at Corban University and is exploring doing more biblical teaching as a career. His next job placement is a big prayer need for them.

Youth Ministry has been going really well. This has been a really

unique year. The dynamic has changed drastically. There are a lot more new students than in previous years. Middle school averaged approximately 30–35 students in the fall and is currently averaging 20–25 in the winter.

Reaching Out

Pastor Troy shared that there were 8 baptisms this last year, 2

new babies born, and 2 weddings. Additionally, 12 people went home to be with the Lord this past year.

Pastor Troy went on to say that we don't want to be a "maintenance ministry." Rather, we should continually strive to carry out the great commission. In other words, we need to be active in service. †

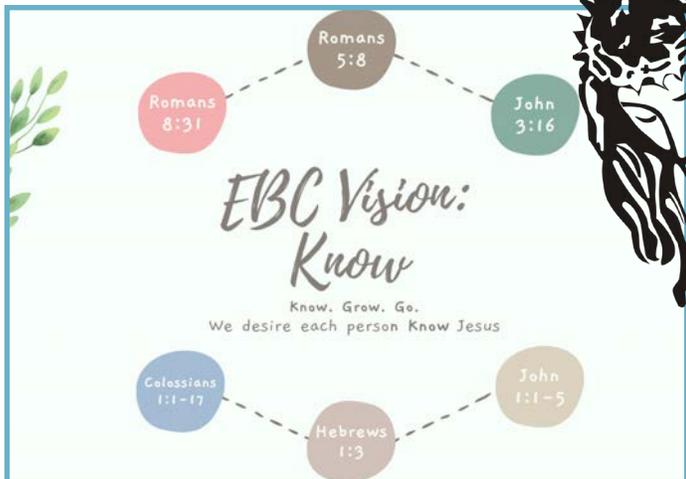
EBC MEN'S MINISTRY

2026 EVENTS



- January 31**
31 Day Journey Wrap Up Breakfast
- March 7**
Men's Breakfast
- May 9**
Men's Breakfast
- August 8**
Men's Breakfast
- September (Date TBD)**
Annual Trap Shoot
- November 14**
Men's Breakfast

THANK YOU, Alison Johnson, for providing the above graphic.



Winter / Spring 2026 Children's Classes

9:00 Service

Nursery Birth - 3 Years Rooms 61,59
Children's Church 3yrs. - Kinder. Room 52
Children's Church 1st-5th Grades Room 71

10:30 Service

Nursery Birth - 3 Years Room 59
3 Years - Kindergarten Room 183
1st & 2nd Grade Room 283
3rd -5th Grades Room 277
Middle School & High School Room 135



Winter/Spring 2026 Adult Sunday School Classes

10:30 Service

Bible in Life Room 121
Book of Genesis Room 122
1 Peter Room 131
Foundations of the Faith Room 226
Sermon Recap Room 224
Faith Lesson Series Room 228
Young Adults Room 222



THANK YOU, Alison Johnson, for providing the Sunday School graphics.



Coming Soon!

Store Time

By Kim Disher
Awana Store Shopkeeper

The second Awana store night will be on **February 18 for Sparks** (K–2nd graders) and **February 25 for T&T** (3–5 graders) and **Trek** (middle schoolers).

Ready to Donate?

Did the children in your life receive new toys for Christmas? **OR** ... have they outgrown some of their current toys? If you answered **YES** to either question, please consider donating discarded toys to the Awana store. We're always looking to build our inventory in order to give the children a wide variety of items from which to choose.

Ideas to Consider

Legos®, games, sports items (balls, bats, gloves...), trucks, cars and tracks, dolls (all sizes), dollhouse items, doll clothes, stuffed animals,



small framed pictures, knick–knacks, crosses, arts and craft items (markers, paints, coloring books, stickers, pompoms...), jewelry, flashlights, headlamps, speakers, tape measures, tools (hammers, screwdrivers...), small lotions, lip balm, bubble bath,

hair items, items for gifts for moms, dads and siblings (kitchen items ...).

Thank YOU!

Whatever you find to donate, we are greatly appreciative of your support of our Awana program. †

More Than a Grand Prix!

Start Your Engines

By Lena and Matt Calef

January 25, 2026: Cars lined up in the staging lanes ... coffee brewed ... breakfast laid out. The crowd was ready for the competition to begin! Shortly after 9 AM, **EBC's Awana Grand Prix** was underway!



THANK YOU to everyone who helped make this event go smoothly! We could not have held this event without the many hands and feet of Christ.

God's Gift to Awana Staff: Knowing Their Stories

As **Matt** and I get to know the families that come to Awana, we get to know their stories. This year we have several parents who would not step in church on a Sunday, but were in attendance for this event. Aside from weekly interactions, this day was going to be one of those rare times where we could share the Gospel clearly. As a result, seeds of

the Gospel were planted that day, in between the races ... coffee ... breakfast.

More Than Words

I (**Lena**) don't know about others, but I want my life in and out of the church to show Christ, but especially when I know there are limited chances to openly share. Everytime **Matt** or I stand up in front of our parents, we pray they see something **more** than our words. We pray that they see our actions point to *something larger* than a book award or trophy.

Our Community Is Blessed

The ability to have an Awana Club open to the community is a blessing and an opportunity to grow in Christ *collectively*. I pray that every time we open the doors of our building we humbly realize the mission field around us and engage it. We are thankful for every child, parent, grandparent, and volunteer who comes in the door for Awana. **And ... as leaders we both pray that we don't take it for granted.** †



Photos by Lena Calef.



Visiting the Taj Mahal.

The Context of Advent

The season of Advent was a wonderful time to reflect on God's goodness to us as people. While we rejoiced in this season, we are acutely aware of the suffering, chaos, and hostility in our broken world.

The good thing is that the hope, peace, joy, and love that God offers us through Christ are *not* relative to our circumstances. Think about the context of the Christmas story. It could have been characterized by despair at an unplanned pregnancy, but instead, that very pregnancy was characterized by hope, not just for Mary and Joseph, but the whole world.

Could Have Been ...

It could have been overshadowed by the anxiety of what others thought or how their responses would affect the future of this new little family, but instead, it was characterized by faith, trust, commitment, and a peace that only God could give to Mary and Joseph. *It could have*



Real Italian food with some of our mentors.

been characterized by deep peace that only God could give to Mary and Joseph.

It could have been characterized by deep sadness at the injustice and suffering surrounding the political requirements of the times, the hostility toward the Jews, or the insecurity in which Joseph and Mary found themselves. *However, it was characterized by joy in the simple things that God provided* all along the way for Joseph and Mary and their newborn child.

This child, born into a family, full of love, who would make the ultimate sacrifice of love so that we, too, could experience true hope, peace, joy, and love.

Deep Challenges in West Africa

We very much appreciate your prayers for West Africa. While we can't say too much about specific events you may have read in the news, we have had to evacuate our workers out of Mali and many from Niger due to security concerns.

After 39 years, **Sahel Academy** has had to close its doors. It has been heartbreaking and stressful. This has occupied a significant amount of Steve's time and energy, as well as that of others in SIM Leadership.

Often, we find ourselves echoing the prayer of King Jehoshaphat of old when he cried out, **"We do not know what to do, but our eyes**

are on you" (2 Chronicles 20:12)

Where in the World Are the Schmidts?!

Thank you for praying. This quarter was full of travel. We enjoyed a lovely autumn week in the foothills of the Alps in Italy, helping to lead the launch of SIM's 16th Global Leader Development cohort, which brought together leaders from around the world. It is a privilege to serve alongside such a diverse group of godly, committed leaders within SIM.

35th Wedding Anniversary

While traveling in Asia for training and speaking, **Steve** and **Mikki** were able to visit India to celebrate their 35th wedding anniversary. While there, God provided a sufficient internet connection for

➔ Please see "Schmidt" on page 19.

What is SIM?

We are an evangelical mission agency, working with churches around the world. Our multi-cultural workers are sent by churches to share the good news of Jesus Christ in communities where He is least known. They serve in teams in more than 70 countries and on every inhabited continent.



Mikki to successfully defend her dissertation proposal. We also stopped in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on the way back to Ghana to visit some good friends.

Steve was not able to travel to Malaysia as planned for the **SIM International** meetings due to multiple crises in the region as described above. Please continue to pray for open doors for the gospel in our region and for people to turn to Christ in the midst of such instability and challenge. Mikki traveled again to Indonesia to train trainers for the Paths to School Improvement program, which is set to launch there early next year.

The local partner is in a much better position to start this year with a solid business plan and a clear vision for the future. There are also several enthusiastic trainers who have followed through on their philosophy of Christian education and biblically integrated worldview lesson assignments. There



PSI Training: Jakarta, Indonesia.

is incredible potential for kingdom impact there!

Research Trip

Finally, Mikki was able to travel to Uganda in November to collect data for her doctoral research. Thanks to the help of the ACSI Director in Uganda, she was able to visit 16 schools, travel approximately 800 kilometers, interview 27 school leaders, and collect

→ Please see "Schmidt" on page 20.



Mikki and Grace visiting school leaders.

Prayer and Praise:

1. Praise God for successful Leader Development Trainings in Italy and spiritual refreshment and encouragement in Asia.
2. Praise God for Christian School Leaders in Indonesia and a good PSI Training there. Pray for those who have completed their training to finish their philosophy papers and biblical worldview lesson plans within the next month, so they can become certified trainers and teach others. Pray for Mikki as she reads their work and gives helpful feedback.
3. Praise God for a successful and fruitful time of gathering data among Christian schools in Uganda. Pray for Grace as she continues to lead the ACSI work in that area. Pray that Mikki would be able to analyze and make sense of the data and write clearly to the glory of God.
4. Praise God for safety in travel—on many airplanes and over many roads, both busy city streets and bumpy remote ones!
5. Pray for the safe delivery of grandbaby #4 and for **David** and **Julie**, **Ethan** and **Luke**, and baby as they prepare for future service in Chad.
6. Pray for peace and stability to come to the troubled countries of West Africa. Pray for those who are suffering and grieving at this time.
7. Pray for those having to make hard decisions related to security.



315 teacher surveys. Now for the data analysis and writing!

Pray that she can make sense of it all and communicate well to the glory of God! Her final draft was due by January 27. She will have one, maybe two more opportunities for revisions after that, but is praying it can be in good shape by the end of January, with sights set on graduation the first weekend in May.

Present

We are in Ghana for Christmas. This weekend we will host one of our traditional crepe breakfasts for our church ministry team. We will gather with a small group of friends and fellow missionaries on Christmas Day. We miss our kids and grandkids and look forward to seeing them in the New Year.

Future Months

Steve will travel to Nigeria in January to speak at SIM Nigeria's annual Spiritual Life Conference and visit ministries in the country. Steve will make a similar trip to Ivory Coast in February. Steve will also be



Botanical Gardens—Airport: Doha, Qatar.

facilitating a strategic review with the Ghana team in the coming new year.

Home Visits

We are planning a short home assignment from May to July of 2026.

Our current jobs make it difficult for us to be away for longer periods, so we will not be able to visit everyone. However, since our home assignments are now every two years instead of four, we will attempt to visit as many of you as possible.

If we didn't visit you last time, *or if you would like us to plan a visit to your church or area at a specific time*, please let us know so we can begin planning our itinerary. Two non-negotiables are mid-April (*the anticipated arrival of baby #3 in the David and Julie Kusserow household!*) and the first weekend in May (*Mikki's anticipated graduation from her doctoral program*).

Lastly, please be in prayer for Julie and David and the kids as they prepare for a future ministry in Africa with **AIM - Africa Inland Mission**.

Peace Be With You!

May you experience the hope, peace, joy, and love that only Christ can bring in rich ways this Christmas season.

With many THANKS for your prayers and a peace that passes understanding,

Steve and Mikki Schmidt †

Plan to Participate!



Ongoing Shoebox Collection

By Kay Whitney
EBC Coordinator,
Operation Christmas Child

This year the EBC family will have the opportunity to make regular donations for the shoeboxes of Operation Christmas Child.

We will make this easy for you to assist with this ongoing collection by placing a collection box in the foyer. Each month we will have a different type of item that we are collecting.

In February, we ask that you gather and donate:

- ☒ Hats
- ☒ Scarves
- ☒ Mittens
- ☒ Gloves

THANK YOU in advance for any items you can provide for this ongoing collection drive! †



Stories from the FIELDS

Editor's Note: Stories from the FIELDS is produced monthly by Village Missions. They contain inspirational accounts from many of those supported by Village Missions who are currently working in the mission field.

If you would like to receive your copy directly from Village Missions or desire more information on this organization, please contact Tim Griffiths at:

tgriffiths@villagemissions.org.

Relaying the Message

Melanie directed our Christmas play portraying the events of Jesus' birth from the shepherds' perspective. The play had a touch of humor as the confused shepherds tried to figure out what was happening. Forty-five people came to see the play—a big group for our small church! We are praying for the message to take root in the hearts of the teens and children who participated and in those who attended.

Alex & Melanie Pompu
Maidstone, SK †

Community in Action

A December storm flooded our area with 17 inches of rain over 3 days, saturating the ground, knocking out power, closing roads, and disrupting the sewer system. Skykomish Food Bank volunteers—including several from the church—went into action. They served meals and provided a warm place for people to stay. Cathy and I enjoyed helping, too.

Tony & Cathy Bittner
Skykomish, WA †

Coffee & Blessings

We launched a donation-only coffee shop in the church's Fellowship Hall. We named it Blessings Coffee because we will also deliver free coffee to people in the community. We gave Blessing Coffee cards to the teachers at the school, inviting them to select a free coffee to be delivered on the last day of school before Christmas break. Eighteen teachers and a family new to town received free coffee drinks in the first month. Blessings Coffee will be open every Friday, and we'll provide free coffee to the school once a month. Each cup has 1 John 4:9 on the side: "This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him" (NIV).

Kevin & Katelyn Quinn
Wyanet, IL †

Missionaries & Ministries EBC Supports!

The focus of the Mission Committee is to follow the mandate Jesus gave to go into the world for the advancement of evangelism, discipleship and Christian education in a manner effective for the culture being reached. The committee exists to be a supportive and evaluative conduit between EBC and the work on the mission field that the congregation supports, maintaining an attitude of advocacy for missionaries and corresponding projects.

Note: EBC is committed to supporting missionaries. Some information and/or supported missionaries are purposefully omitted from this page to protect their safety in hostile political or social climates.



Tim and Mallory Brooks
 Missionary Aviation Fellowship
tbrooks@maf.org

- ✘ Serving in Winema, Indonesia
- ✘ Tim is a mechanic for MAF planes on the base
- ✘ Both Tim and Mallory are studying to gain proficiency in the language
- ✘ Support for team members on the MAF base



Joshue and Diana Bulande
 SIM
dianaafrica@gmail.com

- ✘ Serving in Lichinga, Mozambique
- ✘ Church planting, discipleship training
- ✘ Women's Bible training
- ✘ Children's ministry and tutoring



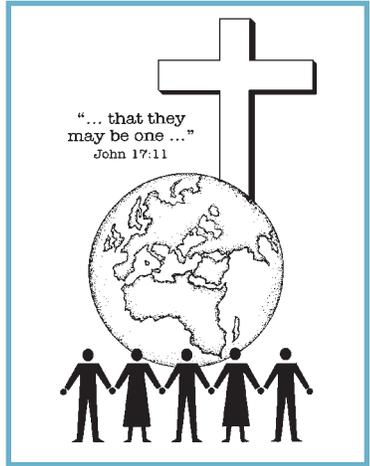
Dan and Judy Burke
 Ethnos 360 (formerly New Tribes Missions)
dan_burke@ntm.org

- ✘ Serve in Bolivia in Cochabamba and San Borja
- ✘ Development of a discipleship center in northwestern Bolivia
- ✘ Work with the Chimane people group
- ✘ Write and produce books and commentaries in Chimane for the tribal people
- ✘ Teaching, construction, leadership development



Kevin and Jennifer Domes
 IN FAITH
kjdomes.ministry@yahoo.com

- ✘ Work at Bethel Bible Camp in Wellfleet, Nebraska
- ✘ Involved in youth ministry, maintaining the camp facility
- ✘ Teach in the Awana program, lead a high school youth ministry
- ✘ Administrative retreats
- ✘ Jennifer also works in food preparation for the summer camps



→ Please see "EBC Supports" on page 23.

EBC Supports

← (Continued from page 22.)



Ivan and Mary Goossen
Avant Ministries
ivary@avmi.org

- ✦ Serve in Mucambo, Brazil
- ✦ Involved in evangelism and discipleship
- ✦ Administrate programs such as a coffee shop outreach
- ✦ Long time involvement with a Christian radio ministry



Eric and Judith Hedeem
Ethnos 360
eric_hedeem@ntm.org

- ✦ Serve in Papua, New Guinea
- ✦ Mentoring new missionaries to the field
- ✦ Translation work
- ✦ Judith works in the medical clinic and member care
- ✦ Leadership development among the indigenous people



Paul and Leslie Lanquist
Village Missions at Tanwax
Country Chapel, Washington
360.832.3584
pastorpaulanquist@gmail.com

- ✦ Developing outreach programs for the homeless in their area
- ✦ Starting a women's ministry program
- ✦ Leading the church in new directions after COVID divisions and other issues left the church without a senior pastor for nearly a year



Jake and Moriah Michalovich
Living in Dallas and serving
Polk County, Oregon
jmichalovich1@gmail.com

- ✦ Jake is the Area Director for Young Life in Polk County.
- ✦ Moriah serves as a Young Life leader.
- ✦ Sharing the Word of God and discipling youth.



Steve and Mikki Schmidt
SIM Missionaries
steve.schmidt@sim.org
mikki.schmidt@sim.org

- ✦ Steve is the SIM regional Director for West Africa
- ✦ Supervises country directors in 11 countries
- ✦ Both Steve and Mikki work in SIM's Global Leader Development Program
- ✦ Mikki does educational consulting work, and also works in the Paths to School Improvement program which trains Christian school leaders throughout Africa.



Other Outreach Ministries We Support:

- ◆ Awana
- ◆ Crisis Pregnancy
- ◆ Prison Ministry
- ◆ Village Missions
- ◆ CEF
- ◆ River of Life
- ◆ SAT-7 (Dennis & Cindy Wiens)
- ◆ Weekday School of the Bible
- ◆ Mission Connexion
- ◆ The Gate

Sunday Worship Services:

9:00 & 10:30 am Sunday Morning
Worship Services
10:00 am Coffee Time!

Awana: (September through April)

Wednesdays 6:30 to 8:00 pm

**Please check the Sunday Bulletin and
the EBC website for updated calendar
items as they are announced.**

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Comments, suggestions and/or constructive criticism
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Text: 503.931.8239

Email: bob.disher@charter.net

The opinions expressed herein are
those of the author of the articles and
are not necessarily endorsed by the
leadership of EBC.

**Thank
you!** ✝



THANK YOU, Alison Johnson, for providing the calendar graphic.



Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

2 Corinthians 9:7-8 (NIV)