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OUR MISSION



Nashville Christian Family® exists to provide Christians and the community at large with ways to strengthen and grow as a part of the Middle Tennessee Christian Family. This local monthly publication is designed to promote positive living by sharing with readers of all ages relevant and timely news and information related to health, faith, parenting, youth, finances, Christian entertainment, missions, church leaders, and much more GOOD NEWS!

FROM THE PUBLISHER

Where a Mother's Love Begins and Never Ends

Mother's Day is a celebration that honors mothers, motherhood, maternal bonds, and the lasting influence of mothers in society. It is observed on various dates around the world, most commonly in March, April, or May.

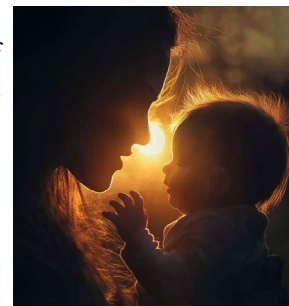
The formal designation of Mother's Day as a holiday began in the United States. While many cultures throughout history have celebrated mothers and motherhood—such as the Greek worship of Cybele, the Roman festival of Hilaria, and the Christian observance of Mothering Sunday—modern Mother's Day is not directly descended from these traditions. However, in some countries, the holiday has become closely associated with these older customs.

The modern observance of Mother's Day began in 1908 when Anna Jarvis held a memorial service for her mother in America. She then launched a campaign to make Mother's Day an officially recognized holiday in the United States. Her efforts were successful in 1914, when the holiday was formally established. However, by the 1920s, Jarvis had become deeply disappointed by its growing commercialization. Jarvis's vision of Mother's Day spread internationally and is now celebrated around the world. In this tradition, people honor their mothers, grandmothers, and maternal figures with gifts, cards, flowers, and acts of remembrance.

There were earlier observances honoring mothers in America during the 1870s and 1880s, but these remained local and never gained widespread recognition. Jarvis did not acknowledge Julia Ward Howe's efforts in the 1870s to establish a "Mother's Day for Peace," nor did she connect her holiday to Protestant church celebrations such as Children's Day. She also did not associate it with the traditional Christian observance of Mothering Sunday, maintaining instead that the creation of Mother's Day was entirely her own.

In 1912, Anna Jarvis trademarked the phrases "second Sunday in May" and "Mother's Day," and founded the Mother's Day International Association. She specifically insisted that "Mother's" should remain a singular possessive—emphasizing that each family should honor its own mother, rather than using a plural possessive to commemorate all mothers collectively.

Proverbs 31:25 "She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come." John 16:21 "A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world." Proverbs 31:28–29 "Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: 'Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all.'" Proverbs 31:25-27 "Strength and honor are her clothing; she is confident about the future. Her mouth is full of wisdom; kindly teaching is on her tongue. She is vigilant over the activities of her household; she doesn't eat the food of laziness." These are from the NIV.



Robert Stringfellow, Publisher, 615-815-8765
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ON THE COVER 20

Darrell Waltrip Automotive Group celebrates 40 years of serving Middle Tennessee with integrity, excellence, and a heart for giving back. From its humble beginnings to becoming a trusted name in the community, this milestone reflects a legacy built on faith, service, and lasting impact. See page 20 to learn more.

3, 8, 13 Faith, Family & Encouragement

6, 12 Hope, Living & Community

1-40 Good News

SPECIAL FEATURES

10 Trevecca President Dr. Dan Boone Announces Plans to Retire Following more than Two Decades of Leadership

24 The Pocket Jesus Phenomenon: A Small Symbol Making a Big Global Impact

26 From Want to Wisdom: Embracing Contentment in Financial Decisions

NEXT ISSUE



Pastors Kent and Candy Christmas discuss the historic event happening on July 26: Redigging the Wells of Revival at the iconic Ryman Auditorium.

May 2026

DEPARTMENTS

3 From The Publisher
Where a Mother's Love Begins and Never Ends

6 Are We There Yet?
New Summer Experiences at the Wonders Center and Science Museum

7 Secrets From the Studio
The Power of a Broken Road

8 Family Matters
Christian Parenting: Teaching Kids About Jesus' Wedding Promise

8 Constitutional Corner
Questions and Answers

10 Teachable Moments
Be Berean in the Age of AI News

12 City Scene
Century 21 Capital Properties: Building Homes, Investments and Generational Wealth in Nashville

13 An Encouraging Word
Growing in Faith in Every Season of Life

14 Senior Scene
The "Costs" Of Long Term Care (Custodial Care)

14 Teachable Moments
The History and Impact of Vacation Bible School

16 Business Today
Five Reasons To Build Your Career as a Christian Financial Advisor: When Alignment Matters more than Advancement

16 Teachable Moments
America 250: Honoring Our History By Teaching the Next Generation

18 Legal Matters
What Protections Exist For Religious Liberty Under Tennessee Law?

23 Music Notes
A Nashville Tradition! 44th Sunday Mornin' Country at the Grand Ole Opry House

25 Faith At Work
Why Are You Still Looking Up?

28 Family Flicks
Over One Million Have Seen Angel Studios' Film "Sight"

30 Healthy Living
Solace Implant Center and Oral Surgery: Serving Nashville Families with Excellence and Compassion

32 Hassle Free Zone
How To Clean and Disinfect High Touch Surfaces

33 Mission Makers
United Way of Greater Nashville Powers Pathways to High-Demand Careers

34 Best Books
Summer Reading For Kids and Youth: Choose Wisely!

35 Mighty Men
Most Everything Around Us, Is Profoundly Connected Within Us

36 Parent With Purpose
Reading the Bible with Your Child

36 Body & Soul
The Thirst for Nearness

37 God's Plan For Salvation And Eternal Life With Him

38 About Our Advertisers

CONTENTS

VOLUME 16, NUMBER 9





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New Summer Experiences at the Wonders Center and Science Museum

Don't Miss the Creation Event of the Year this June!



As the school year winds down and families across Middle Tennessee look ahead to summer plans, many are searching for experiences that go beyond simple entertainment that might include something meaningful and engaging. Just west of Nashville in Dickson, The Wonders Center & Science Museum continues to offer exactly that: a place where families can explore science through a biblical lens, while making lasting memories together.

The Wonders Center represents more than just a day trip. It's an opportunity to reinforce biblical truth in a culture where questions about origins, science, and faith are increasingly common. This summer, the museum is expanding its offerings with an exciting lineup of family-friendly events and exhibits designed to encourage learning, spiritual growth, and fun all at the same time.

The Summer Highlight and Creation Event of the Year!

The highlight of the season is the **Wonders of Creation Conference: The Evidence Speaks, June 10th – 12th**, a three-day event presented in partnership with the **Institute for Creation Research (ICR)**, a leading scientific research organization dedicated to studying origins science from a biblical perspective (icr.org). This powerful and thought-provoking experience brings together PhD scientists, researchers, and experts in creation science and is designed for all ages, with age-appropriate breakout sessions that explore scientific topics through the authority of Scripture.

Conference sessions address many of the questions Christians encounter today, including topics surrounding dinosaurs, DNA evidence, fossil records, geology, the age of the Earth, Origins, and Biological Design. Through research-driven presentations, attendees will examine current scientific findings and learn the differences between evolutionary and biblical frameworks.

Additional sessions explore topics such as evidence of a global flood and rapid geological change, the presence of soft tissue in dinosaur fossils, and the complexity of living systems, pointing to intentional design rather than random processes.

Participants will learn how there is proof that living things are designed with purpose, how DNA comparisons are used to talk about human origins, and how cells function like complex machines. These sessions will help attendees better understand science from a biblical perspective and feel more confident discussing these topics in everyday life. Discounts for the conference are available for families and museum members.

Wonders Center & Science Museum Founder and Director David Rives, a respected voice in creation science and biblical authority, will be featured throughout the conference. His presentation, reflecting the themes of his book, *Wonders Without Number*, takes attendees on a journey through the universe and living systems, pointing to clear evidence of intentional design.

Reflecting on the upcoming summer season at the Wonders Center, Rives shared, "We want families to walk away not only amazed by what they've seen, but strengthened in what they believe. With everything happening this summer, from the conference to our new exhibits, we're continuing to create an environment where faith and science work together to point people back to the Creator."

NEW Exhibit This Summer: Wonders of the Sea Grand Opening Kids Day - May 26th. In addition to the conference, The Wonders Center is preparing to unveil its newest attraction: the "Wonders of the Sea" exhibit. This immersive experience will take families beneath the surface to explore live marine life, ocean ecosystems, and the intricate design found in God's underwater creation. It's an exciting addition that expands the museum's already diverse range of exhibits, giving returning visitors something entirely new to experience. **This event is a discounted ticket day.**



Immersive Experiences & Hands-On Learning for All Ages.



Inside the museum, families can already enjoy a variety of interactive displays covering topics like dinosaurs, space, biology, and earth science, and learning stations which make it easy for children to engage, all presented from a biblical worldview. The Wonders Center also features a literature exhibit, which reveals

an authentic 1,000-year-old Bible scroll. Another immersive experience for all ages to enjoy is one of the top ten planetarium experiences in the world, *The Heavens Declare*, exploring space from a creation perspective.

Plan Your Visit. Throughout the summer months, additional family events and programs will provide even more reasons to visit. Whether attending the conference, exploring new exhibits, or simply spending a day learning together, The Wonders Center offers a refreshing alternative to typical summer activities and a chance to escape the summer heat!

For *Nashville Christian Family* readers, The Wonders Center & Science Museum stands as a reminder that learning about the world God created can be both exciting and faith-affirming. It's a place where curiosity is welcomed, and truth is explored.

To learn more about the **Wonders of Creation Conference**, upcoming summer events, or to plan your visit, go to wonderscenter.org.

To learn about an upcoming special appreciation luncheon and museum experience for pastors and ministry leaders email: outreach@davidrivesministries.org before May 14th.

Wonders Center & Science Museum

855 TN-46, Dickson, TN 37055, (931) 212-7990

Visit: wonderscenter.org

Visit: davidrivesministries.org



—Christine Johnson is a writer and Director of Public Relations at the Wonders Center & Science Museum.





The Power of a Broken Road

On a recent episode of *Bridges*, I welcomed **Terrell and Brandy Scott** for a deeply personal and inspiring conversation about what they call “the power of a broken road.” The phrase captures an essential truth that our journeys, with all their twists, turns, and unexpected detours, often lead us exactly where we are meant to be.



Terrell and Brandy Scott are no strangers to life’s challenges. As pastors and founders of *Restoration Place Church*, the couple has shared openly their experiences with disappointment, loss, and redemption. During our conversation they reflected on how broken seasons shaped their faith and deepened their understanding of God’s purpose. Instead of viewing pain as something to avoid, they described how trials became opportunities for transformation — chances to discover resilience, hope, and renewed calling.

Brokenness can be Painful and Purposeful

Brandy shared that early in their marriage, life didn’t unfold as they had planned. There were seasons of financial struggle, ministry setbacks, and personal heartbreak. Yet in the middle of those

hardships, she said, came moments of profound clarity. “When you’re walking a broken road “you learn to depend on God in ways you never would if everything were easy.” Her words highlighted a universal truth: brokenness can be both painful and purposeful.



Terrell echoed that sentiment, adding that broken roads reveal what truly matters. He spoke about how failure, disappointment, and the feeling of being “stuck” often prepare people for

greater things. “If we avoid the broken road,” he said, “we also avoid the blessings that come from it.” His perspective reminded viewers that detours may actually be divine redirection — an idea that aligns beautifully with the theme of *Bridge*, a show dedicated to connecting spiritual insight with real-life experience.

Learning to see Pain as a Process Not a Destination

I think the conversation highlights how disappointments and detours can be redeemed by God and used to make us more resilient people. The Scotts

encouraged viewers to see pain as a process, not a destination. They spoke about forgiveness, community support, and the importance of being honest about one’s struggles — themes that have been central to their ministry. Their authenticity offered hope: even when the path seems unclear, faith can transform broken pieces into something beautiful.

Throughout this conversation, one message stood out clearly: broken roads are not failures. They are faith-building experiences that draw us closer to God and equip us to help others. For Terrell and Brandy Scott, the broken road wasn’t just a chapter in their journey — it was the foundation of their purpose. that sometimes the most powerful testimonies are born from the hardest paths to walk.

Today’s Secret from the Studio: The hardest paths to walk may get you exactly where you are meant to be.

—*Monica Schmelter is the host of Bridges on Christian Television Network and airs in over 50 million homes, You can also watch on demand at bridgeswithmonica.com*



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WITH SPECIAL MUSICAL GUEST, JASMINE BRADY

Christian Parenting: Teaching Kids About Jesus' Wedding Promise

The Ancient Wedding Custom. As wedding season arrives and we celebrate love and commitment, there's a beautiful story from ancient times that helps us understand Jesus' love for us in a whole new way. This is a wonderful teaching moment for our children!



The Covenant Ceremony. In Jesus' day, when a young man decided he wanted to marry a woman, he would bring both families together for a special ceremony. The young man would pour wine into a cup and offer it to the woman he loved, saying something like, "I am making a covenant with you. Do you accept?"

If she drank from the cup, her answer was yes. In that moment, they became betrothed, a commitment even stronger than our modern engagement. It's an engagement that can only be broken by divorce; a formal legal proceeding called a "get" in Hebrew.

The Time of Separation. The couple would separate and return to their own homes. Communication happened through a trusted friend who carried messages between them and helped prepare

for the wedding day. During this time, the bride's identity changed. She was considered "bought with a price" because the groom had paid a bride price to her family. She wore special clothing, so everyone knew she belonged to someone. And she lived in anticipation, watching and waiting, because she had no idea when her groom would come back for her.

The Groom's Preparation. Meanwhile, the groom was hard at work building a home for his bride, typically by adding rooms to his father's existing house. Multiple generations often lived together in these extended family homes.

It's important to know that the groom couldn't decide when the construction was complete. That decision was entirely his father's. Only when the father inspected the work and declared, "It is finished. It is ready," could the wedding proceed.

The Joyful Return. When that moment finally came, the groom would call his friends together. They would march through the streets toward the bride's home, blowing shofars, which are ram's horn trumpets, to announce his arrival. The bride, hearing those trumpet blasts, would know her waiting was over. She would hurry down to meet him, and together with all the wedding guests, they would

travel to the groom's house for a blessed celebration feast.

The Beautiful Connection. Now, think about Jesus at the Passover table with His disciples. He lifted a cup, the cup traditionally set aside for the promised Messiah, and He drank from it. In doing so, He was declaring Himself the long-awaited Savior. Then He explained that this cup represented a new covenant, sealed not with wine, but with His own blood.

Jesus' Promise to Us. Before He left, Jesus made this promise that His Father's house will have many rooms (John 14:2-3) and just as the ancient groom returned to His Father's house to prepare our home, Jesus returned to His Father's house to prepare our home.

A Teaching Moment. So, this wedding season, help your children remember the greatest promise of all. Jesus is preparing a place for us. And oh, what a celebration awaits!

—Lee Ann Mancini is an author, founder of Raising Christian Kids, adjunct professor at South Florida Bible College & Theological Seminary, and executive producer of the animated series Sea Kids.



CONSTITUTION CORNER

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Questions and Answers



1. Is There A Difference Between My Rights Under the Tennessee Constitution Versus the Federal Constitution?

Most state constitutions, including that of Tennessee, are patterned after the U.S. Constitution. However, state constitutions may provide greater protection or may even protect rights that are not protected by the United States Constitution.

Tennessee courts have, in certain instances, held that the rights protected under the Tennessee Constitution are broader in scope than those granted under the U.S. Constitution. For example, in the area of familial privacy, our state Supreme Court has held that Tennessee may impose higher stand-

ards and stronger protections than those set by the federal constitution.



2. What Right Does the Government Have to Listen In On My Private Communications?

There is considerable debate today over the "Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act", often referred to as FISA Section 702. This provision authorizes the U.S. government to conduct targeted surveillance of non-Americans located outside the U.S. to collect foreign intelligence information, often using U.S. tech companies.

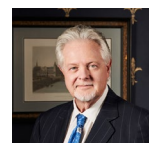
Proponents of this law say that the government uses the information collected to protect the Unit-

ed States and its allies from hostile foreign adversaries, including terrorists, proliferators, and spies, and to inform cybersecurity efforts. A "FISA Court" reviews and approves the government's use of this tool.

Opponents of this provision claim that the U.S. government engages in mass, warrantless surveillance of Americans' and foreigners' phone calls, text messages, emails, and other electronic communications. This information can then be used to prosecute and imprison people, even for crimes that have nothing to do with national security.

The constitutional right at stake is found in the Fourth Amendment's protection against unlawful search and seizure.

—Larry L. Crain, Crain Law Group, PLLC
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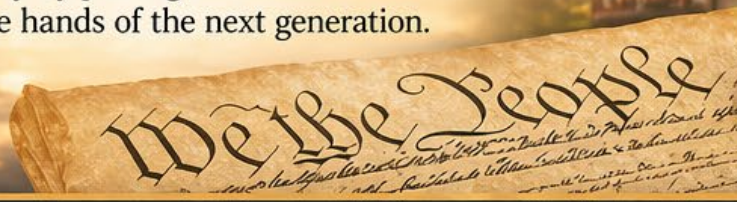
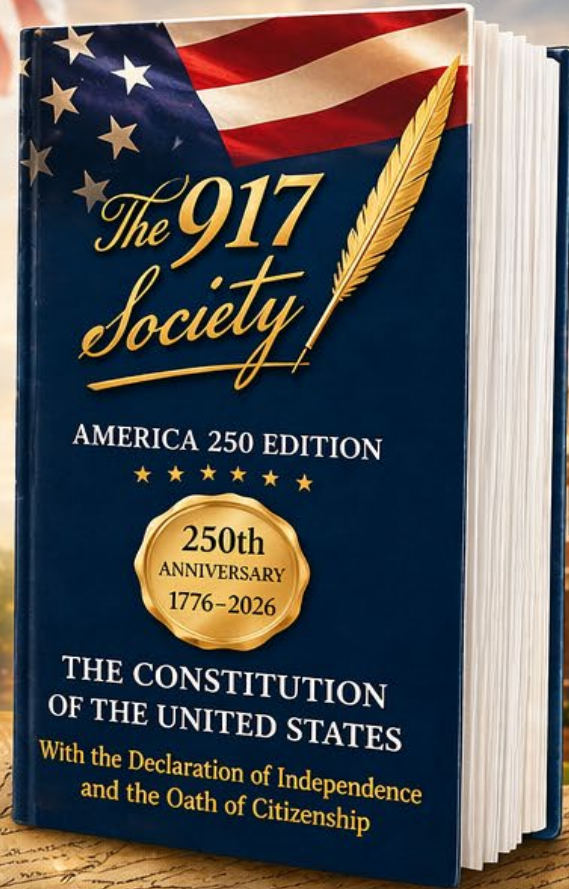


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Trevecca President Dr. Dan Boone Announces Plans to Retire Following more than Two Decades of Leadership



Trevecca Nazarene University President Dr. Dan Boone announced today his plans to retire in 2027, concluding more than two decades of transformational leadership at the Nashville-based Christian University.



A 1974 graduate of Trevecca, Boone became the University's 11th president in 2005, and under his leadership, the University experienced unprecedented growth, positioning it for continued momentum in the years ahead. Throughout Boone's time in this role, Trevecca has grown from approximately 2,000 students to nearly 4,000 and expanded its academic offerings to more than 100 programs ranging from associate degrees to doctoral programs. The University has also invested more than \$250 million in campus construction and renovation while strengthening its reputation for academic excellence and student support.

"Throughout my long relationship with Trevecca, I've believed deeply that the work of this University

is part of God's work in the world," Boone said. "I felt a specific calling to accept the position initially, and it has been clear to me throughout my time here that I was called to help lead that work. My relationship with and commitment to Trevecca remains strong; however, in recent months, I've felt a deep peace that my season as president is drawing to a close. Trevecca is at an exceptionally strong moment in its nearly 125-year history, and I'm confident the next leader will continue building on that foundation. Until that time comes, my wife Denise and I remain fully committed to serving this community and helping ensure a strong and thoughtful transition."

Trevecca Nazarene University's Board of Trustees Chair, Dr. Brian Wilson, commended Boone's incredible years of service and legacy by saying, "We are profoundly grateful for the outstanding and visionary leadership of Dr. Dan Boone and his stewardship of the University with wisdom, competence and unwavering diligence. So much could be said about his great accomplishments, from record enrollment to the addition of modern academic and residential facilities and dozens of new academic programs. Each of those accomplishments come as a result of teamwork with an outstanding cabinet and partners with whom Dr. Boone has surrounded himself. Dr. Boone and First Lady Denise are both deeply loved and respected by the Trevecca community, and we wish them God's richest joys and blessings in the next chapter of their life and ministry."

Wilson continued, "The landscape of higher education in the United States has changed considerably over the past 20 years, and the role of University president is one of the most challenging anywhere. Yet, we are confident that God is already preparing the next lead steward for our school, just as we believe that God in His providence brought Dr. Boone to Trevecca two decades ago, with just the right gift set and vision to help us continue to move Trevecca forward. The Trustees of the University will fulfill their elected responsibilities well over the next few months to ensure a smooth and seamless transition following a clearly established plan and with the assistance of professional partners but most importantly seeking God's direction in prayer."

The executive committee of Trevecca's Board of Trustees has retained FaithSearch Partners to assist in conducting a national search for the University's next president. The search will seek an experienced higher education leader who can build on Trevecca's strong foundation while guiding the University in preparing the next generation of students, from traditional undergraduates to doctoral candidates

and lifelong learners. In the coming days, FaithSearch Partners will begin by consulting with the search committee, the Board of Trustees and key stakeholders to design an intentional framework for the search. FaithSearch Partners has led hundreds of executive searches within higher education with recent successes at four of Trevecca's seven sister schools nationwide through the Church of the Nazarene.

Dr. Andy Westmoreland, senior vice president of education at FaithSearch Partners, added, "Under the guidance of Dr. Boone, Trevecca established itself as a top University in the competitive higher education space, so we are confident that this search will identify a strong talent pool. Alongside the University's Executive Search Committee, FaithSearch Partners will explore the nuances of the presidency at Trevecca, leaning on Dr. Boone's thoughtful leadership experience and sheer love for the entire past, present and future Trevecca community as a guide."



Boone plans to continue serving at Trevecca through the 2026–2027 academic year to ensure a thoughtful and smooth leadership transition.

—Brian Bennett, Communications Director,
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www.trevecca.edu

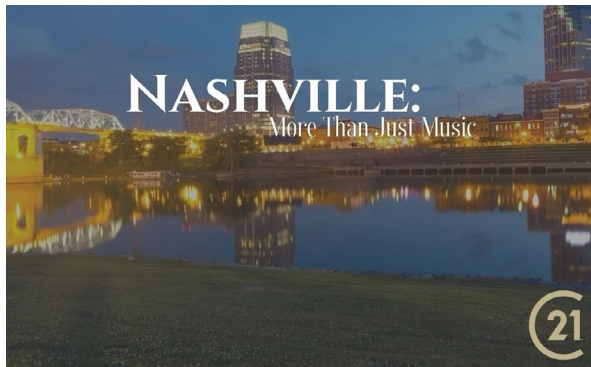


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Century 21 Capital Properties: Building Homes, Investments, and Generational Wealth in Nashville



As Nashville continues to grow into one of the most dynamic cities in the country, opportunities within its real estate market are expanding just as quickly. From luxury high-rise condominiums downtown to accessible pathways for first-time homebuyers, the landscape offers something for every stage of life. At Century 21 Capital Properties, that range of opportunity is intentionally served through leadership, vision, and a committed team.

At the helm is Eva Angelina Romero, owner-broker of Century 21 Capital Properties. As the first Latina in Tennessee to own a Century 21 franchise, Romero's leadership represents both a milestone and a forward-looking vision for Nashville real estate. Her work extends beyond the brokerage. Appointed by the Governor to the Tennessee Housing Development Agency (THDA) Commission, Romero helps shape housing policy and expand access to homeownership across the state.

Romero's leadership is grounded in the belief that real estate is not just about transactions—it is about creating opportunity. Through her service on the THDA Commission, she contributes to initiatives supporting affordable housing, responsible lending, and sustainable development. This perspective informs the mission of Century 21 Capital Properties: helping individuals and families build lasting financial stability.

Under her leadership, the brokerage has developed a team that reflects the diversity and energy of Nashville. With varied backgrounds and specialties, the team serves clients across multiple market segments, with a focus on luxury and investment properties as well as first-time homebuyers.

Luxury Living and Strategic Investment Opportunities: Downtown Nashville has become a hub for luxury living and investment. With continued population growth and strong demand, high-rise condominiums are among the city's most sought-after properties. Century 21 Capital Properties has built a strong presence in this space, working with buyers and investors in premier developments such as The Paramount and The Prime. These properties offer modern amenities, walkable living, and long-term appreciation potential.

For investors, the team provides guidance beyond the transaction—analyzing market trends, identifying rental opportunities, and supporting portfolio growth. Whether purchasing a second home or a long-term investment, clients benefit from local expertise and strategic insight.

First-Time Homebuyers and the Path to Generational Wealth: Equally central to the brokerage's mission is its commitment to first-time homebuyers. Purchasing a first home is a major milestone that can shape long-term financial stability. Century 21 Capital Properties guides buyers through each step—from financing options to competitive offers—emphasizing education, transparency, and support. Clients are equipped with the knowledge needed to make confident decisions.

This work is rooted in the belief that homeownership is one of the most effective tools for building generational wealth. Romero's experience with THDA reinforces how access to the right resources can change a family's future.

A Team Built on Diversity, Service, and Shared Values: One of the brokerage's strengths is its diverse team. In a growing city, representation matters. This diversity enhances the client experience and fosters collaboration within the brokerage. Under Romero's leadership, the team operates with a shared commitment to integrity, professionalism, and service. Each client is approached with care, ensuring a supportive and personalized experience.

Serving Nashville with Purpose: In a community where faith, family, and connection remain central, Century 21 Capital Properties approaches real estate as a platform for service. Romero's role on the THDA Commission reflects this broader mission—helping create pathways to homeownership across Tennessee.

Whether assisting an investor or guiding a first-time buyer, the mission remains consistent: to provide exceptional service while helping clients build a stronger future.

As Nashville evolves, Century 21 Capital Properties continues to meet the needs of its growing population. Through leadership, dedication, and community impact, the brokerage is helping shape not just transactions—but futures.



—Eva Angelina Romero,
Broker/Owner – Century 21 Capital Properties
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Here's what these awesome partners have to say about their experience with Nashville Christian Family:

“As the founder and senior partner of Crain Law Group, PLLC, I am proud to be a Community Partner of *Nashville Christian Family*. It is a beacon of Christian values shared through the testimonies of Christian business men and women who have dedicated their lives to being salt and light. Robert Stringfellow has done a magnificent job of creating a forum for people from all walks of life to share how their relationship with Christ has both impacted their spiritual journey, and given meaning to their chosen profession. Each month, the articles in NCF focus on real life stories of fellowship, hope and encouragement. I highly recommend this publication to all who share a commitment to Christian values, but even more to those who may be seeking answers to questions regarding the Christian faith.”

—Larry L. Crain



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AN ENCOURAGING WORD

Growing in Faith in Every Season of Life

In a culture that often glorifies youth and productivity, it is easy to believe as a person ages that their most meaningful contributions have already happened. Yet, Scripture paints a very different picture. I ran across, Psalms 92:14, and it brought a smile to my face. We have been given a powerful promise: *“They will bear fruit in old age; they will stay fresh and green.”* This verse reminds us that a life rooted in God never stops growing, never stops producing, and never loses purpose at any age.



When we remain connected to God, He sustains us. Even in seasons of loss, illness, or transition, He continues to work in and through us. Just as a tree draws nourishment from the soil, we draw life from our relationship with God, through prayer, reading Scripture, worship, and spending time with Him. Therefore, fruitfulness becomes less about our striving and more about abiding.



Jesus reminds us in, John 15:5, *“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing”.*

This is a vivid picture that allows us to see that a vine is the main plant – the source of life. Branches grow out of it and only stay alive if they remain connected. If a branch is cut off, it withers and dies. We are always completely dependent upon Jesus.

If you are young, you can begin now by building habits that root you in God.

If you are in midlife, recognize that this is a season to continue to grow and a powerful time to influence others as you stay connected to God.



If you are older, know that your fruit may be the most impactful it has ever been because it has been seasoned with life-lessons and experience.

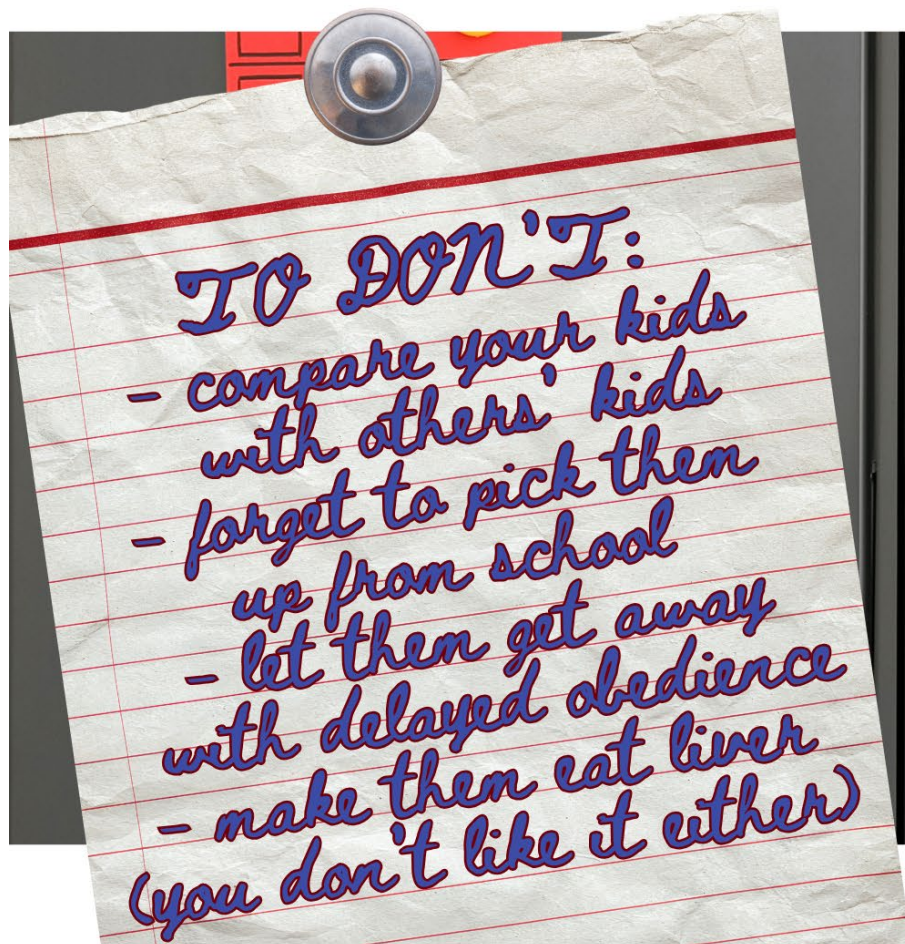
Bearing fruit as a Christian is not a phase of life – it is a lifelong calling. We are assured by the Word that we are never too old or too young to grow, to serve, to make a difference, and to be used by God. As long as we remain rooted in Him, our lives will continue to produce meaning.

No matter your age, God is glorified by our fruit. John 15:8a, *“Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.”*

What season do you find yourself in? Stay rooted in God and trust Him with the growth.

—Rhonda L. Smart, rhondalsmart@gmail.com

Mom, thanks for all you do & even what you don't



Happy Mother's Day - 



The Costs of Long Term Care (Custodial care)

My Mom died in 2020 of Alzheimer's disease at age 94. My Dad is 94 and has Dementia and Parkinson's disease. The cost of caring for my mom for over 3 years was about \$250,000. The last 9 months of her life at a memory facility at \$6000/month. The cost of caring for my dad for the last 18 months has been between \$6200 to \$6500 a month. It is now \$8900/m as I moved him into a memory facility.



No long-term care insurance on either one. Income for them is above qualifying for Medicaid. How to pay? His hard-earned money. Dad was a blue-collar worker that worked his way to mid-level management and was able (due to Mom) to save some money. He retired after 38 years of working and took his Social Security early.

I tell you all this so that you can plan on living. You see it costs to live. And the longer you live the more it is going to cost you. IF they had bought LTC insurance in their 60's they could have saved tens of thousands of that hard-earned money. My current guess is that it would be over \$300,000. And they

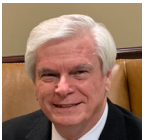
may have spent 20-25 thousand dollars on that coverage.

There is a 70% chance when you are over the age of 65 that you will need some type of coverage. Now you 40 to 60 years old listen up – 40% of this group is using it now! So don't think this is 'old folks' insurance. Let's back up just a bit and learn just what LTC insurance is. LTC coverage is when you are unable to perform unassisted 2 of 6 Activities of Daily Living (ADL). Here is the way I remember these. In the morning when you wake up you need to go from your bed to somewhere (generally speaking, to the bathroom). That is called transferring – going from one location to another. And speaking of the bathroom that is the second activity, you must be able to do all the things associated with toileting. After that you probably head for the shower/bath. This is the third activity. You must be able to perform the necessities of personal hygiene (bathing). Then after getting cleaned up, you put on your clothes. Activity number 4, you must be able to get your clothes on and off. Now that we are all clean and dressed, I'm hungry! This is the fifth activity; you must be able to feed yourself. And the last activity is remaining continence throughout the day.

So, the six ADLs are: Transferring, Toileting, Bathing, Dressing, Eating, and Continence. Paying for such care is available in one of Four ways. 1. Using your hard-earned cash. 2. Depending on the Government; spend down to being eligible for Medicaid (not Medicare). 3. Note that Medicare does NOT pay for long term care. 4. Having LTC insurance. And the number one objection to having LTC/EC insurance? It is a use it or lose it propositions. Until now! 5. Asset based. This is done through either an annuity or a life insurance policy that has a LTC rider.

Experts will tell you the best time to buy this coverage is age 50 to 60. I think that should be 40 to 64 and here's why. There is a policy that if you buy coverage during this age range (and like all insurance the younger you are the less expensive it is) and you never use it the company will return 3 times your paid in premium to your beneficiary. This is a game changer. For more information on all the other details call me and let's discuss.

—H. Ben Davis, III CSA
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The History and Impact of Vacation Bible School



Vacation Bible School—affectionately known as VBS—has been a cornerstone of children's ministry for over a century. What began as a simple effort to give kids meaningful, faithcentered activities during the summer has grown into one of the most influential Christian educational traditions in the United States. Its blend of Scripture, creativity, music, and community has shaped generations.

Early Beginnings. The origins of VBS trace back to the late 1800s, when churches recognized a need for structured biblical teaching outside of Sunday services. One of the earliest known programs was organized in 1894 by D.T. Miles, a Sunday school teacher in Illinois who wanted to provide additional Bible instruction for children during the summer months. Around the same time, Virginia Sinclair Hawes began hosting summer Bible classes in New York City.

These early efforts quickly caught the attention of Christian educators. By the 1920s, denominational publishers were producing dedicated VBS curricula, making it easier for churches to adopt the pro-

gram. What started as small, local initiatives soon became a nationwide movement.

Growth and Cultural Influence. By the mid20th century, VBS had become a summer staple. The postwar boom, suburban expansion, and renewed focus on family life created the perfect environment for churches to host large, vibrant programs. Many congregations ran VBS for two full weeks, complete with crafts, memory verses, music, and themed lessons.

As the decades passed, VBS evolved into a highly creative experience. Themes became more immersive, decorations more elaborate, and music more energetic. Today's VBS programs often feel like a blend of theater, camp, and worship service—designed to engage children's imaginations while grounding them in biblical truth.

The Lasting Impact of VBS. The influence of VBS extends far beyond a single week each summer. For many children, it is their first introduction to church, Christian community, and the Bible. Countless adults



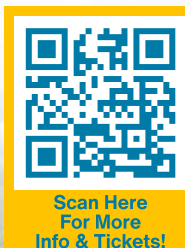
trace their earliest faith memories back to VBS—singing songs, making crafts, and memorizing verses.

Attending VBS This Summer. If you're considering VBS for your child this summer, it's a wonderful opportunity for them to learn, play, and grow in a safe, joyful environment. Each year's theme brings fresh excitement, and kids often look forward to returning year after year. Whether your church is hosting a large, themed program or a smaller, intimate gathering, VBS offers a week of fun with a purpose.

Enhancing Your Church's VBS. For churches preparing their programs, thoughtful supplies can make the experience even more memorable. Swanson Christian Products offers a wide range of cute, faithinspired items perfect for crafts, giveaways, and decorations. Their products help bring VBS themes to life and add delightful touches kids love. You can explore at swansoninc.com.

—Katherine Stewart
Custom Representative,
Swanson Christian Products
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Saturday: Closed



Five Reasons to Build Your Career as a Christian Financial Advisor; When Alignment Matters more than Advancement

Many successful financial advisors reach a point where performance is no longer the problem—alignment is. You’ve built a book, earned credibility, and proven your ability to succeed. Yet beneath the surface, a deeper question emerges: Does the organization I represent reflect what I believe? For Christian advisors, that question often becomes a calling.



1. Gain Freedom to Practice From Conviction, Not Constraint. Christian Financial Advisors choose alignment over limitation. Rather than filtering language or values through firm policies that restrict faith-based conversations, advisors are free to integrate biblical principles into planning and stewardship. *“Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom”* (2 Corinthians 3:17). That freedom restores clarity and confidence in how you serve clients.

2. Your Career Reflects Integrity—Publicly and Privately. When personal convictions and professional responsibilities collide, tension follows. A faith-aligned advisory platform removes that friction. Advisors no longer compartmentalize belief and business—they lead with integrity in both. *“The integrity of the upright guides them”* (Proverbs 11:3). Clients sense this consistency, and trust deepens as a result.

3. Attract Clients Who Share Your Values. Christian advisors don’t need to be everything to everyone. Alignment naturally draws clients who value stewardship, generosity, and eternal perspective. These relationships are stronger, more collaborative, and longer lasting. *“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”* (Matthew 6:21). Shared values create healthier practices and more meaningful work.

4. Rediscover Purpose Beyond Production. Many advisors experience burnout when success is measured only by growth metrics. Christian Financial Advisors find renewed fulfillment because their work serves a higher purpose. *“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord”* (Colossians 3:23). Advising becomes more than a career—it becomes a calling that sustains longevity and joy.

5. Multiply Your Impact Through Faithful Stewardship. A Christian advisor helps clients move from accumulation to intention. By integrating generosity and stewardship into financial planning, advisors witness tangible Kingdom impact. *“Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give”* (2 Corinthians 9:7). Your influence extends beyond portfolios into lives, families, and communities.

A Career Aligned With What Matters Most. Choosing to become a Christian Financial Advisor isn’t about starting over—it’s about finally aligning your experience with your convictions. For over 20 years, we’ve helped advisors transition thoughtfully into faith-aligned platforms that honor their beliefs while supporting professional excellence. If you sense that your convictions have outgrown your current firm, we invite you to start a conversation. Let’s explore what alignment could look like for your career with Wallin, Hargis, & Colquette Wealth Advisors. Your success doesn’t have to come at the expense of your faith. Contact us to learn more.

—Michael Wallin, Certified Financial Planner™. For more information, please visit whcwealth.com or call 615-850-6710.



America 250: Honoring Our History by Teaching the Next Generation

As America approaches her 250th birthday in 2026, we have been given a rare opportunity to do more than hold parades, wave flags, and admire the glories of the past. America 250 should be a time of renewed gratitude, reflection, and responsibility. We honor our history best not by treating it like a museum relic, but by passing its truths to the next generation.



The 917 Society, based in Nashville, has made that mission its calling: putting a pocket Constitution into the hands of students and rekindling civic literacy across the country. The organization has already served schools in all 50 states and reached more than 3,000 districts with 8th graders this past year with more planned for this important historical milestone of America 250 in 2026.

Our nation’s founding was not merely an event in 1776; it launched an enduring experiment in ordered liberty, self-government, and God-given rights. If we want this anniversary to mean something lasting, we must return to the very document that gave structure and protection to those ideals. The 917 Society’s 2026 focus is rooted in that conviction, emphasizing constitutional literacy as a meaningful way to celebrate America 250 and help students understand the inheritance they have received as citizens.

This year, that vision comes to life through the special edition America 250 Pocket Constitution. Schools are being invited to place orders now so students can receive these resources at no cost, and the broader ministry of churches, families, and communities can rally around the same effort. According to the 917 Society’s order page, schools and volunteers can request Constitutions for 7th- or 8th-grade programs, while churches, civic groups, and community organizations can also place general requests for events and outreach.

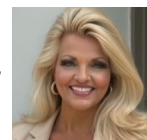
Just as important, this is a mission people can join in practical ways. Volunteers are needed to help deliver Constitutions to schools and support outreach in communities that still need coverage. The 917 Society also notes that it needs help with phone calling, social media, grant writing, and school delivery efforts. And because this work is powered by generosity, not taxpayer funding, donors make it possible for students to receive their pocket Constitutions and supporting resources free of charge. Donations go directly toward putting U.S. Constitutions in the hands of school children, and the organization also highlights support for classroom-based engagement, including contest incentives and student recognition.

That is why church gatherings, homeschool groups, patriotic programs, and community events are such an important part of the America 250 moment. Bulk orders for group use help expand the reach of constitutional education, and the 917 Society also promotes smaller Amazon purchases as a way to support its printing and distribution mission.

Every order becomes more than a purchase; it becomes an investment in civic renewal. In a time when too many young Americans are disconnected from the nation’s founding principles, honoring our history means placing truth in their hands. America 250 is not only a celebration of where we have been. It is a call to decide what kind of nation we intend to be.

Visit www.917society.org to learn how you can get involved.

—Joni Bryan, Founder and Executive Directory, 917 Society



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What Protections Exist for Religious Liberty Under Tennessee Law?



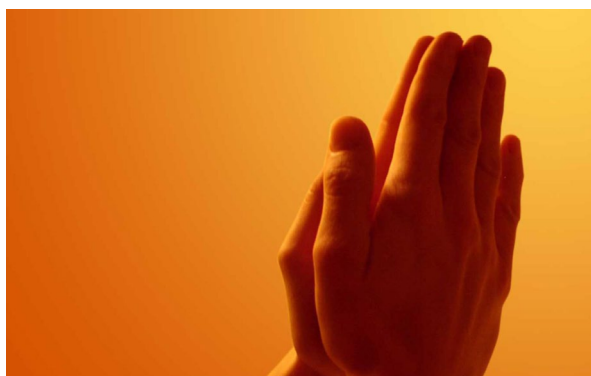
When considering what protections exist for the exercise of our basic religious freedoms most look to the federal constitution and cases decided by the U.S. Supreme Court. But Tennessee also has a rich history of enshrining protections for the exercise of such freedom, and has traditionally placed a high value on the ability of individuals to express religious speech and engage in religious activity.

1. Tennessee Constitutional Protection

Tennessee’s Constitution, Article I, § 3, provides:

That all men have a natural and inalienable right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own conscience; that no man can of right be compelled to attend, erect, or support any place of worship, or to maintain any minister against his consent; that no human authority can, in any case whatever, control or interfere with the rights of conscience; and that no preference shall ever be given, by law, to any religious establishment or mode of worship.’

Our Tennessee Supreme Court has routinely held that the language in our state constitution, when compared to the guarantee of religious freedom contained in the federal constitution, is a stronger guarantee of religious freedom. See *Carden v. Bland*, 199 Tenn. 665, 288 S.W.2d 718, 721(1956).



2. Tennessee’s Preservation of Religious Freedom Act.

This Tennessee law provides broad protection for one who claims their religious exercise has been burdened by some government action. Such indi-

viduals may assert their rights under this statute as a claim or defense in any judicial or administrative proceeding and may obtain such declaratory relief, including monetary damages. In addition, a person who prevails in any proceeding to enforce this section against a government entity may recover the person’s reasonable costs and attorney’s fees.

This law, which may be found at Tenn. Code Ann. § 4-1-407, also has some very specific protections. For example, one provision states: “A government entity shall not subpoena a clergy member’s sermon, including notes used to prepare a sermon or an audio or video recording of a sermon, or subpoena a clergy member’s attendance to testify regarding a sermon, for use in a civil or administrative action.”



3. Protection Against Discrimination When Religious Organizations Contract With The Government

If a church or religious organization contracts with a government agency, this law provides that it retains its independence from federal, state and local governments, including the religious organization’s control over the definition, development, practice and expression of its religious beliefs. State and local governments cannot require a religious organization to alter its form of internal governance or to remove religious art, icons, scripture or other symbols in order to be eligible to contract to provide assistance or to accept grants or other forms of disbursement funded under any program or public contract. See Tenn. Code Ann. § 12-3-308.

4. Right to Wear Religious Garb and Symbols

School employees, including teachers, enjoy a statutory right under Tennessee law to wear religious garb or symbols so long as they do not disrupt the school environment. The statute further protects their right to “read a religious book (including the Bible) during non-instructional time” and to “quietly say grace before a meal” and to “meet with other school employees for prayer or scriptural study before or after school or during the employee’s lunch period.” Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-8004.



5. Religious Exemptions Under Tennessee Law

Tennessee also protects religious liberty through various specific exemptions and carve-outs, including but not limited to:

Healthcare conscience protections:

Tennessee law provides conscience exemptions allowing certain healthcare providers and institutions to refuse participation in abortion, sterilization, or contraceptive distribution if contrary to religious or moral beliefs.

Religious exemptions from vaccine mandates:

Tennessee allows religious exemptions to certain vaccine requirements.

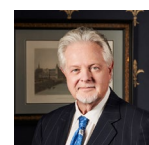
Religious-based exemptions for employers and benefits

State law allows individuals to object based on their religious beliefs to participation in contraceptive-related mandates that include abortifacients. This includes the right of an employer to refuse to provide insurance coverage for such items based on its religious or faith-based objection.

6. Parental Opt-Out of Curriculum

Parents have a statutory right under Tennessee law to be provided notice by school officials who intend to present a “sexual orientation” or “gender identity” curriculum to their child. Parents have the right to inspect the curriculum at least thirty days before it is presented and to request that their child be excused from receiving the instruction based on the parents’ religious or philosophical objection. Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-1308.

—Larry L. Crain, Crain Law Group, PLLC
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DARRELL WALTRIP AUTOMOTIVE GROUP

CELEBRATES 40 YEARS

For nearly four decades, Darrell Waltrip Automotive Group (DWAG) has built a reputation that extends far beyond the automotive industry. Known throughout Middle Tennessee for its guiding philosophy, “Darrell Waltrip Cares,” the organization has redefined what it means to operate a dealership group. Now celebrating its 40th anniversary, DWAG marks the milestone with an impressive legacy: more than 400 employees, 152,000 vehicles sold, over 1.5 million service visits completed, and more than \$10 million invested back into the communities it calls home.



Darrell Waltrip Automotive Group's Franklin campus

Since its founding in 1986, DWAG has not only served customers with integrity and professionalism, but has also created a legacy grounded in compassion, partnership, and action.

“We opened the Honda store in 1986 and it was on the wrong side of the interstate,” said Darrell Waltrip. “When you crossed over 65 and started going east we were alone over here all by ourselves in the middle of a corn field. We built here 40 years ago, just a little Honda store. Along the way we added Subaru and Buick and GMC. We’ve got four great brands all right here on this campus now and it all started with that one little Honda store.”

At its core, the Waltrip Cares philosophy is simple but powerful. A business should be deeply connected to the well-being of its community. For DWAG, that belief has never been a marketing slogan. Instead, it has been a blueprint for meaningful, measurable impact. Over the past 40 years, Waltrip Cares has invested more than \$10 million while working with hundreds of charitable organizations and hosting impactful initiatives of its own.



DWAG supports local nonprofits through ongoing community giving



Darrell Waltrip reflects on the company's early beginnings

One of the most impactful examples of this philosophy in action is the Drive Away Hunger Challenge, a program

that has become a cornerstone of DWAG's community outreach. Launched in 2013, the initiative partners with local schools in Williamson County and the Franklin Special School District to collect food for families in need. What began as a grassroots effort has grown into a regional movement, engaging students, educators, and families in a shared mission to fight hunger.

Working closely with GraceWorks and other local partners, the Drive Away Hunger Challenge has reached an extraordinary milestone, with more than 2.4 million pounds of food collected and distributed to local pantries serving families in need. This achievement represents not only the scale of the program, but also the power of community collaboration.

“For 40 years, Darrell Waltrip Automotive Group has led with heart, not just business,” said Alicia Bell, Chief Executive Officer of GraceWorks. “Their partnership with GraceWorks, including efforts like the Drive Away Hunger Challenge, continues to make a meaningful difference for neighbors across Williamson County.”



A local hero is recognized through DWAG's Hometown Heroes program

While addressing basic needs like food security is essential, DWAG has also made it a priority to celebrate the individuals who strengthen their communities every day. Through its Hometown Heroes program, the organization shines a spotlight on teachers, veterans, first responders, and other local changemakers. Each month, one deserving individual is recognized with a personal visit, a commemorative trophy from Darrell Waltrip, and a \$500 donation to the charity of their choice.



DWAG supports expanded access to healthcare in the region

Healthcare and social support have also been central to DWAG's mission. For more than a decade, the group has partnered with the Williamson Health Foundation to improve access to quality medical care. In 2022, DWAG became the first corporate sponsor of the foundation's largest-ever capital campaign, “More for You. Close to Home,” helping fund major expansions to emergency, cardiac, and neonatal services.

“We are extremely grateful for the partnership and support of the Darrell Waltrip Automotive Group that has extended for nearly a decade,” said Leigh Williams, Executive Director of the Williamson Health Foundation. “They are much more than a donor; they are a cornerstone of our community's well-being. Their culture of giving back has helped transform our health system and



Volunteers help collect and distribute food for local families

This achievement represents not only the scale of the program, but also the power of community collaboration.

“Their partnership with GraceWorks, including efforts like the Drive Away Hunger Challenge, continues to make a meaningful difference for neighbors across Williamson County.”



DWAG employees provide gifts for families during the holiday season

The spirit of giving is especially visible during the holiday season, when DWAG employees come together for the annual Salvation Army Angel Tree program. Since 2002, this employee-driven effort has helped brighten the holidays for nearly 100 children each year, providing gifts, clothing, and essential items to families facing hardship.

ensures we can continue providing world-class healthcare right here in Williamson County.”

Beyond healthcare, DWAG has demonstrated a long-standing commitment to housing and stability through a 15-year partnership with Habitat for Humanity of Williamson-Maury, helping build multiple homes for families in need. The organization has also supported major community enhancements, including the expansion of Williamson Medical Center and the development of a dog park at the Williamson County Animal Center.



DWAG supports homebuilding efforts for local families

Inclusivity has long been a focus as well. As early as 1994, DWAG became the first corporation to join the Waves Office Recycling Program, supporting Waves, Inc., and reinforcing its commitment to creating opportunities for individuals of all abilities.

In times of crisis, the group has not hesitated to act. Following the devastating 2020 Nashville tornado, DWAG made a \$120,000 donation to support recovery efforts, demonstrating



DWAG supports community spaces including local animal programs

its role as a dependable partner in moments of need. That same spirit of loyalty to the community was evident again during Hurricane Helene relief efforts, when DWAG staff came together to load multiple trailers with much-needed supplies and personally deliver them to shelter locations, ensuring timely support reached those affected the most.

Support for veterans remains another important priority, with DWAG investing in veteran-owned businesses and initiatives that extend its impact beyond traditional philanthropy.



DWAG teams organize and deliver supplies to communities in need

Over the years, each of DWAG's dealerships has earned significant recognition for excellence. Darrell Waltrip Honda has received the Honda President's Award 22 times and ranks as the number one Honda dealership in Tennessee by volume. Darrell Waltrip Buick GMC has been named Dealer of the Year and is also number one in volume in Tennessee. Darrell Waltrip Subaru stands out as Middle Tennessee's only Stellar Performer dealership and has earned Subaru's highest honor, the Pinnacle Award, eight times along with numerous Love Promise awards.

“My parents always taught us that with hard work you can do anything,” said Waltrip. “I think that's the legacy they left my brother Michael and I and our sisters with. That's just what we've done here with the Darrell Waltrip Automotive Group and I couldn't be more proud.”

What truly sets the Darrell Waltrip Automotive Group apart, however, is not any single program or achievement, but the culture that drives them all. From porters and technicians to sales managers and executives, employees across the organization actively participate in community initiatives, turning charitable efforts into shared experiences that strengthen both the company and the communities it serves.

“My journey with Darrell Waltrip Automotive Group has been defined by continuous growth and a commitment to excellence,” said Jimmy Harris, General Manager of Darrell Waltrip Subaru. “I'm grateful for the opportunity to lead our team while also having the flexibility to deepen our engagement in the community and support initiatives that make a lasting difference.”



DWAG team members actively engage in community initiatives



Community partnerships are central to DWAG's mission

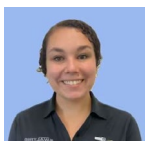
In many ways, DWAG's success can be measured not just in dollars donated or vehicles sold, but in the relationships it has built over time. Schools, nonprofits, healthcare providers, and local families have all become partners in a broader mission, one rooted in compassion, collaboration, and long-term impact.



As the automotive industry continues to evolve, the Darrell Waltrip Automotive Group remains guided by the same principles that have defined its past. Growth is not pursued for its own sake, but as a means to do more good.

Ultimately, the story of DWAG is one of intentional impact. It is a story about recognizing that businesses have both the ability and the responsibility to make a difference. And after 40 years, that legacy is visible every day, in full food pantries, in families with safe places to call home, in patients receiving life-saving care, and in communities that are stronger because one organization chose to lead with heart.

—Charlotte Blackwell, DWAG Representative,
Love Promise Champion
www.darrellwaltripsubaru.com



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A Nashville Tradition! 44th Sunday Mornin' Country® at the Grand Ole Opry® House



The tradition continues! Sunday Mornin' Country® returns to the Grand Ole Opry® House this year with another full lineup of the best Country and Gospel Music artists who will be bringing songs of inspiration in a wholesome, family-friendly atmosphere. People from everywhere are invited to experience an unforgettable celebration of music featuring a dynamic lineup of acclaimed artists and rising stars.



The 44th Annual Sunday Mornin' Country® is scheduled for June 7, 2026.



The Grand Ole Opry® House is truly a distinguished and historic venue where many giants of Country Music have stood in the iconic circle to perform their classic hits or to sing a favorite country or gospel song.

With a blend of great country and gospel artist, Sunday Mornin' Country is a can't -miss event that promises something for everyone.

The program gets underway at 4:00 PM with a rousing warm-up beginning at 3:30 PM. This additional pre-show bonus features soloists and performances by The Country Chorale®, directed by Mark Thomas.

This ninety-voice choir is made up of Christian Country and Gospel artist who come from all over the United States and around the world to be a part of this iconic event. To honor the 100th Year Anniversary of the Grand Ole Opry®. The Country Chorale® featuring music students from Carpe Arista Academy will perform a tribute to celebrate this special time in Nashville's history.



Hall of Famer Jimmy Fortune returns with timeless country classics.

This year's featured lineup includes some fresh faces, as well as several renowned Pop, Country Music and Gospel artist, including Hall of Fame Member and former member of the Statler Brothers, Jimmy Fortune.

Legendary Nitty Gritty Dirt Band co-founder, John McEuen, will join us again. Country Music Hall of Famer, Grand Ole Opry® member, and Harmonica Virtuoso, Charlie McCoy will be back, as well as Grand Ole Opry® member and one of Nashville's most valued treasures, Mandy Barnett.

Christian Country Music artist and television host, Melanie Walker will be performing, as well as Grammy Award winner, John Berry. Both top artists are returning to deliver their strong and powerful messages in song.



Melanie Walker delivers a heartfelt performance of faith and song.

Performing on our stage for the first time this year is Cassidy Daniels, a finalist on the popular CBS series, The Road. Also, joining us with a special song is Aubrey Nicole, a finalist from this season's NBC program, The Voice.



Legendary artists take the stage for an evening of inspiration and music.

Patriotism and the American spirit are always important elements at Sunday Mornin' County. Nikki Headley will perform the National Anthem. Other artists performing patriotic renditions include a Sunday Mornin' Country staple, The Tennessee River Boys and The Fox Brothers, who have been a part of Sunday Mornin' Country® since the beginning.

Naturally, the show would not be complete without some foot-stomping banjo-picking, fiddle-playing bluegrass music! Cutter & Cash and The Kentucky Grass are back bringing their foot-stomping banjo-picking, fiddle-playing bluegrass music! These young guys always bring the house down!



Powerful performances highlight the heart of country and gospel music.



A celebration of music, faith, and tradition continues at the Grand Ole Opry®.

Besides the performers mentioned above, other wonderful country and gospel artists scheduled to appear include Leon Everett, Adam Warner, Cowboy Joe & Trail Jazz, The Music City Quartet, Dianne Sherrill, Makenzie Phipps, Mike Scott, and of course, the Sunday Mornin' Country® Band.

Warm-up artists and soloists who are a part of The Country Chorale® and set to perform are: Debbie Bennett, Shelton Bissell, Judy Gilbert, Tonya Gosser, Linda Grimes, Keith Ital, Teresa Kitchens, Bev McCann, DeeJae Moon, Barbara Jean Smith, David Smith

—Melanie Walker

SPECIAL FEATURE

Brought to you by: **Swanson Christian Products**
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The Pocket Jesus Phenomenon: A Small Symbol Making a Big Global Impact

In an age defined by digital noise and constant motion, a surprisingly simple object has begun capturing attention across continents: Pocket Jesus. These small figurines are designed to fit easily into a pocket, purse, or palm. Yet despite their size, they're becoming a powerful global symbol of comfort, connection, and quiet faith. The phenomenon began modestly. Small devotional items have existed for centuries, but the modern wave of Pocket Jesus figures has taken on a life of its own. Social media platforms, especially TikTok and Instagram, have played a major role in their spread. Videos of people gifting these tiny figures to strangers, leaving them in public spaces, or carrying them during difficult moments have gone viral. What started as a personal gesture of faith has evolved into a global movement rooted in kindness and shared humanity.



One of the most striking aspects of the Pocket Jesus trend is its crosscultural reach. While the figure is unmistakably Christian in origin, its appeal has extended far beyond traditional religious boundaries. Many people describe carrying one not as a doctrinal statement but as a reminder of hope, grounding, or emotional reassurance. In a world where anxiety and uncertainty often feel overwhelming, the tactile presence of a small, meaningful object can be surprisingly powerful. Communities around the world have embraced the idea in creative ways. In the United States, church groups distribute Pocket Jesus figures during outreach events, hospital visits, and disasterrelief efforts. In Europe and Asia, the figures have become popular gifts exchanged among friends, coworkers, and even strangers as tokens of goodwill.

The impact isn't just emotional—it's social. Many people who share these figures describe the experience as a catalyst for connection. A simple gesture—offering someone a Pocket Jesus—often opens the door to conversation, empathy, and shared stories. In a time when loneliness is increasingly recognized as a global health concern, these small interactions matter. They remind people that they're seen, valued, and not alone. There's also a growing charitable dimension. Some organizations now sell handcrafted Pocket Jesus figures to support humanitarian causes, from cleanwater initiatives to refugee assistance. The symbolism of hope and protection aligns naturally with efforts to uplift vulnerable communities, turning a personal keepsake into a tool for collective good.

Critics might dismiss the trend as sentimental or simplistic, but that misses the deeper truth. The Pocket Jesus phenomenon isn't about the object itself—it's about what it represents. In a fractured world, people are hungry for meaning, connection, and reminders of something larger than themselves. These tiny figures offer that in a form that's accessible, portable, and deeply personal. Ultimately, the phenomenon of the Pocket Jesus shows that even the smallest symbols can spark global movements. In pockets around the world, a quiet revolution of hope is taking place—one tiny figure at a time.

—Katherine Stewart - Custom Representative,
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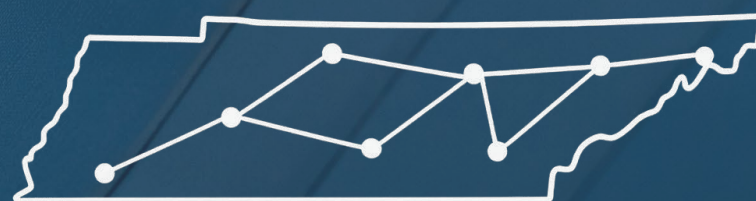
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Building Kingdom Business Community
Across Tennessee.

FAITH AT WORK

Why Are You Still Looking Up?

There is a moment in the Ascension narrative that can startle our heart if we let it. Jesus rises, the cloud receives Him, and the apostles stand there, frozen, staring upward, their eyes fixed on the last place they saw Him. Then two angels appear and ask a question that slices through the silence: *“Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven?”*



It is a question that exposes something deep in the human soul. We long for certainty. We long for visible proof. We long for God to act in ways we can see, measure, and confirm. The apostles were no different. Just moments earlier they had asked Jesus, *“Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?”* They were ready for the finale, the fulfillment, the restoration. But Jesus redirects them: *“It is not for you to know the times or periods...”*

In other words: **the promise is certain, but the schedule is not ours.** We have to live each day like Jesus will return tomorrow, because He might.

And this is where the apostles show us the way. They do not return to Jerusalem discouraged. They do not interpret “not yet” as “not ever.” Instead, they embrace what might be the most underrated virtue in the Christian life: **disciplined hope.** They gather with Mary and the early believers. They devote themselves to prayer. They wait, not passively, but purposefully. Their anticipation becomes preparation.

The Church Fathers describe them as praising God continually in the Temple, living in a posture of expectation for what would come “from on high.” Thomas Aquinas later explains that Christ’s withdrawal is not a loss but a gift, because faith grows stronger when it leans on what is unseen, hope stretches higher when it waits for what is promised, and charity deepens when it reaches toward heaven without needing to see heaven.

Augustine adds the inner logic: faith and hope cling to realities not yet visible, and hope requires **patience**, the willingness to trust God’s timing without demanding God’s timetable.

The apostles teach us how to live in the holy tension between promise and fulfillment. They waited in prayer. They sought the Spirit. They prepared

their hearts. And when the Spirit came, they did not hesitate, they became witnesses to the ends of the earth.

The angels’ question still echoes today: **“Why are you still looking up?”**

Not to shame us, but to awaken us. When we do not know when, God invites us to focus on how: How to pray. How to hope. How to witness. How to live today with the fire of the Kingdom already burning within us.

Jesus’ Ascension is not an ending or a pause in God’s work. It is the beginning of ours. May we stop staring upward in uncertainty and start stepping forward in mission.

If this is my last post, I want all to know there was only one purpose for all that I have written; to have made a positive difference in the lives of others.

—Anthony “Tony” Boquet, the author of *“The Bloodline of Wisdom, The Awakening of a Modern Solutionary”* and *“The Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, A Devotional Timeline”*



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From Want to Wisdom: Embracing Contentment in Financial Decisions



I recently attended a wedding where the minister recited the familiar vows, “to have and to hold.” As I listened, I wondered if those words resonated with the young couple the way they did with me. To explain this difference, I’ll share a story.

Consider a busy executive who cared deeply for his 90-year-old grandmother. After a long, demanding day, he looked forward to a peaceful evening at home. But just as he arrived, his grandmother called to say her washing machine had stopped working. Without hesitation, he reassured her, “Don’t worry. I’ll take care of everything.”

The next morning, determined to help, he went to a big-box store to buy a replacement. But as he stood

in front of rows of washers, he realized he didn’t know what color his grandmother’s machine was. He called to ask. “What color is your washer?” “It’s brown,” she replied.

He scanned the options. “Brown? They only have white, black, blue, and green. No brown.” His grandmother then asked, “Where are you?” “At the store, getting you a new washer. When did you buy your current one?” “I bought it in 1978. It just needs a repair. Your grandfather had it fixed many times. I don’t need a new one.”

Her response was a reminder that previous generations often found contentment not in acquiring the newest things, but in caring for and appreciating what they already had. There is a quiet wisdom in valuing longevity, quality, and the memories attached to our possessions.

That day, his grandmother offered a valuable lesson about “having and holding.” In today’s culture, we excel at acquiring things. Consumerism is everywhere. But we often forget the importance of holding on, valuing, and stewarding what we already have.

In my daily role as a financial planner, I often help clients evaluate when it makes sense to purchase

or sell cars or homes, take vacations, or make educational decisions. For example, last week a client considered selling a car he had bought just a year ago, which would have resulted in a \$6,000 loss, simply to upgrade to a newer model with heated backseats, despite never using the backseat himself.

As stewards of the resources God has entrusted to us, it’s vital to remember the primary ways we use money: Give, Live, Grow, and Owe (taxes and debt). Impulse purchases can erode our ability to build wealth, lower our standard of living, and make us beholden to lenders.

Before making a major purchase or giving in to the urge to “have,” pause and consider the long-term impact. Seek wise counsel, whether from a trusted advisor, your church community, or our office. By choosing to hold, rather than simply to have, you can set yourself and your family on a path toward lasting financial health and peace.

—Michael Wallin,
Certified Financial Planner™
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FAMILY FLICKS

Over One Million Have Seen Angel Studios' Film "Sight"

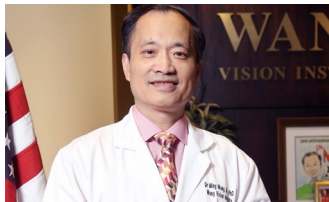
Dr. Ming Wang, Harvard & MIT graduate (MD, magna cum laude) and one of the few laser eye surgeons in the world today who holds a PhD in laser physics, announced today that over one million people have seen the Angel Studios' film "Sight" (-FREE link:sight.drmingwang.com)! A video about the film "Sight" has received 162 million views!

The film is now available now in over 30 countries and is currently steaming on Angel Studios' platform (angel.com). It has won the Best Picture Award at ICVM International Christian Film Award! "Sight" is based on Dr. Wang's autobiography "From Darkness to Sight", and his faith journey is also featured in the award-winning film "God's Not Dead".



A Sight move Bible study has been published:
 Seeing beyond our pain;
 Seeing beyond our circumstance;
 Seeing beyond ourselves;
 Seeing beyond our own culture;
 Seeing beyond our polarization.

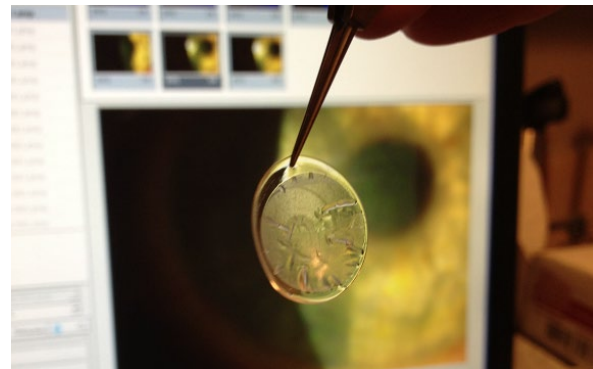
About Dr. Ming Wang, MD, PhD



As a teenager, Ming fought hardship in his childhood and came to America with only \$50 and earned two doctorate degrees, one in laser

physics and one in medicine, and graduated with the highest honors from Harvard Medical School and MIT. Dr. Wang has performed over 55,000 laser vision surgeries, including on over 4,000 doctors.

The amniotic membrane contact lens, which Dr. Wang has invented (and holds two U.S. patents), has been used by tens of thousands of eye doctors throughout the world in nearly every nation, and millions have had their eyesight restored.

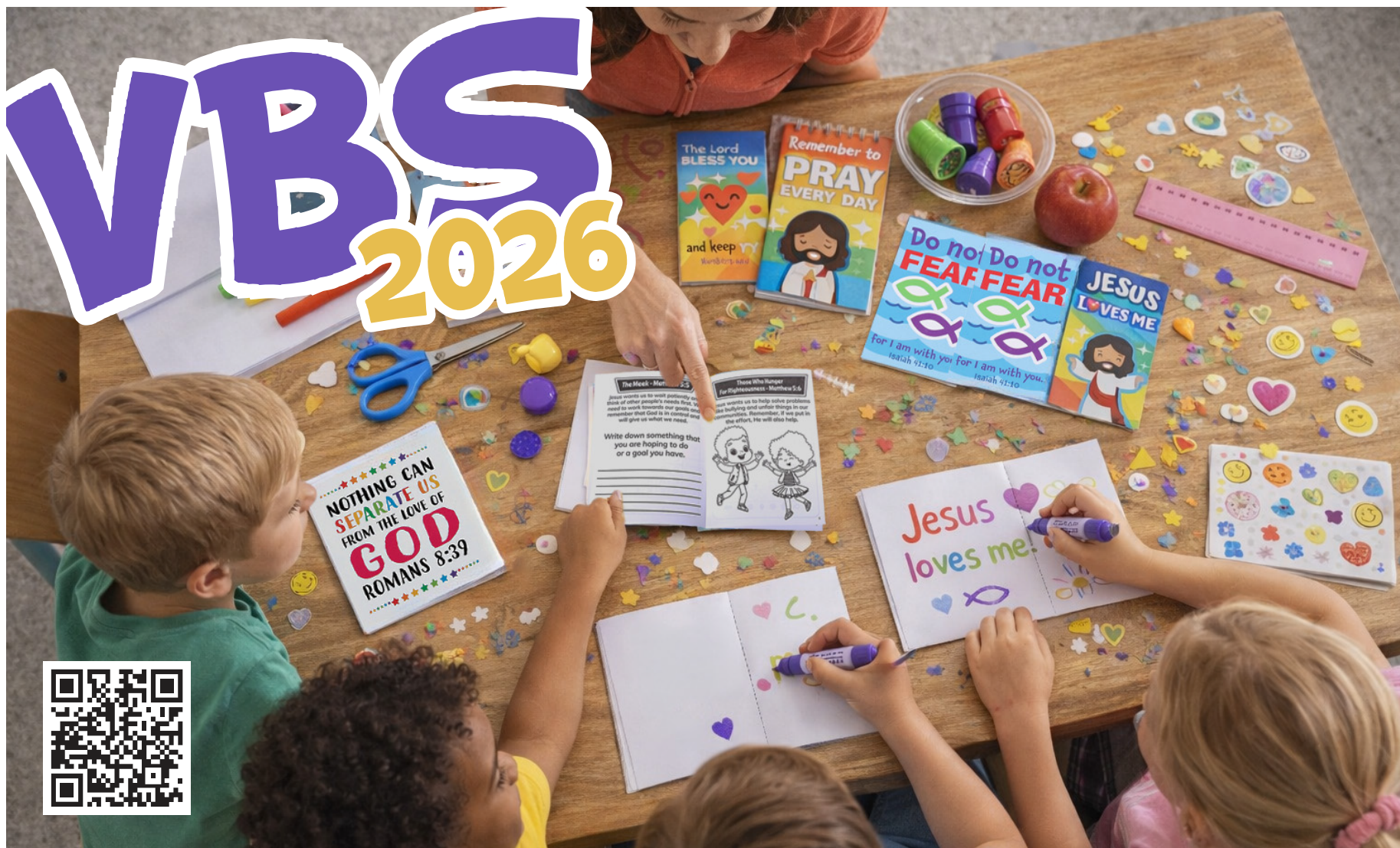


An amniotic membrane contact lens, a breakthrough developed by Dr. Ming Wang, used worldwide to help restore vision.

Wang Foundation for Sight Restoration has helped patients from over 40 states and 55 countries, with all sight restoration surgeries performed free-of-charge. Dr. Wang was named the Kiwanis Nashvillian of the Year for his lifelong dedication to help blind orphans from around the world.

The film "Sight" (FREE link: sight.drmingwang.com), distributed by Angel Studios, is based on Dr. Wang's autobiography "From Darkness to Sight" and co-stars Terry Chen and Greg Kinnear.

—Leona Walthorn



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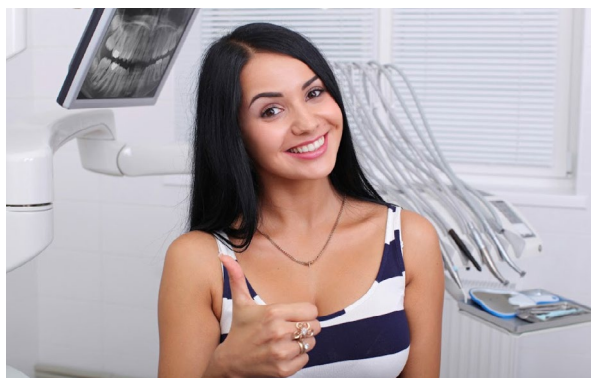
Solace Implant Center and Oral Surgery: Serving Nashville Families with Excellence and Compassion



In a growing city like Nashville, where families are building roots and communities are strengthening their foundations, access to high-quality healthcare is essential. Oral health, often overlooked, plays a critical role in overall well-being. At Solace Implant Center and Oral Surgery, patients find not only advanced clinical care, but also a practice grounded in compassion, integrity, and service to the community.

At the heart of Solace is Dr. Romero, a highly respected oral surgeon known for both his technical expertise and his commitment to patient-centered care. As the first Latino oral surgeon in the state of Tennessee, Dr. Romero represents both excellence in his field and an important milestone in expanding representation within healthcare. His presence in Nashville reflects a broader mission: to make specialized oral surgery accessible, welcoming, and trustworthy for families of all backgrounds.

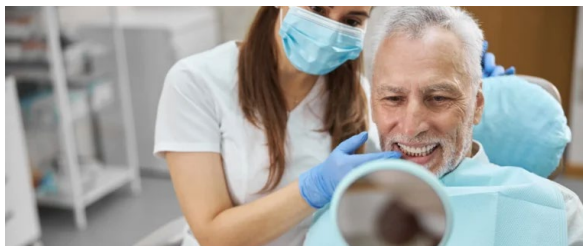
Dr. Romero's approach to care is rooted in precision, education, and empathy. Oral surgery can be intimidating for many patients, especially for children and young adults experiencing procedures for the first time. Whether it is wisdom teeth removal, dental implants, or corrective jaw procedures, Dr. Romero and his team prioritize clear communication and reassurance at every step. Patients are guided through their treatment plans with transparency, ensuring they understand not only the procedure itself but also the long-term benefits for their health.



One of the most common procedures performed at Solace Implant Center is wisdom teeth removal, a rite of passage for many teenagers and young adults. While some may view it as routine, timely removal of wisdom teeth is an important preventive measure. Impacted or misaligned wisdom teeth can lead to pain, infection, crowding, and even damage to surrounding teeth. For families, addressing these issues early can prevent more serious complications later in life.



At Solace, wisdom teeth procedures are handled with advanced technology and a focus on patient comfort. Sedation options, careful surgical planning, and attentive post-operative care all contribute to a smoother recovery process. Parents often express relief knowing their children are in capable hands, and young patients frequently remark on how much easier the experience was than they anticipated.



The reputation of Solace Implant Center is reflected in the voices of its patients. Across numerous Google reviews, a consistent theme emerges: professionalism, kindness, and exceptional results. Patients frequently describe the staff as welcoming and attentive, noting how the team takes time to answer questions and ease concerns. Many highlight the efficiency of their procedures, paired with a genuine sense of care that extends beyond the operating room.

Others share stories of transformative outcomes. From restored smiles through dental implants to pain-free recoveries after complex extractions, patients often speak about renewed confidence and improved quality of life. These testimonials point

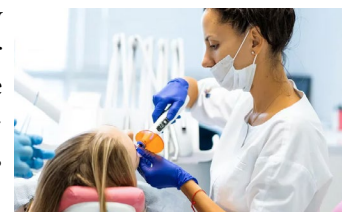
not only to clinical success but also to the trust that Solace has built within the Nashville community.

Beyond individual procedures, Solace Implant Center emphasizes the importance of family-focused care. Oral health decisions often involve multiple generations, from teenagers needing wisdom teeth removal to adults seeking long-term solutions like implants. By creating an environment that is both professional and approachable, the practice supports families in making informed choices together.

Faith and service also play a quiet but meaningful role in the practice's philosophy. In a city known for its strong Christian community, many patients appreciate a healthcare experience that reflects values of compassion, honesty, and stewardship. While clinical excellence remains the foundation, the team at Solace understands that treating patients with dignity and respect is equally important.

As Nashville continues to grow, so does the need for specialized care providers who can meet the demands of a diverse and expanding population. Solace Implant Center and Oral Surgery stands out not only for its advanced capabilities but also for its commitment to community impact. Dr. Romero's leadership, combined with a dedicated team, ensures that patients receive care that is both cutting-edge and deeply personal.

For families considering oral surgery, whether for wisdom teeth removal or more complex procedures, choosing the right provider can make all the difference. At Solace, patients find more than a surgical practice—they find a partner in their health journey, one that prioritizes excellence, compassion, and lasting results.



In every smile restored and every patient reassured, Solace Implant Center continues to set a standard for oral surgery care in Nashville, serving the community with both skill and heart.

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—Solace Oral Surgery & Implant Center Staff Writer

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How To Clean and Disinfect High-Touch Surfaces

What Are High-Touch Surfaces? High-touch surfaces are the ones that multiple people put their hands on throughout the day. In professional settings, especially in healthcare and food service industries, high-touch surfaces also include equipment handles, countertops, and payment terminals. The frequent handling of these surfaces makes them hotspots for the accumulation of pathogens and grime, so rigorous cleaning is necessary. Regular disinfection of these areas is more than a simple cleaning task; it's a great way to limit the spread of germs.

Most Common High-Touch Surfaces to Disinfect Daily

Cars: As drivers, we're constantly touching the steering wheel, gear shift knob, radio controls, and turn signals. Regular disinfection of these surfaces helps mitigate the risk of spreading germs and viruses, creating a safer driving environment for drivers and passengers alike. **Touchscreens:** Touchscreens are everywhere. Whether on tablets, ATMs, or self-service kiosks, these screens are touched constantly. Smartphones in particular are like an extension of our hands. Studies have shown that cell phones can be dirtier than toilet seats! Cleaning touchscreens with a soft cloth dampened with a disinfectant solution should be a part of your daily routine. **Computers:** Whether it's a personal laptop, work computer, or a computer in a public space, a keyboard and mouse are germ hotspots. Wiping down your keyboard and mouse with a disinfectant wipe every day can make a big difference in keeping germs at bay. **Toilets:** These are perhaps the most obvious when we think about cleaning. Every part of a toilet, from the seat to the flush handle, is a high-touch area. Germs, including bacteria and viruses, can easily spread from the toilet to our hands and then to other surfaces. It's essential to use a good disinfectant cleaner daily, making sure to cover all the parts people touch. **Doorknobs and Light Switches:** Often overlooked, everyone touches these whether at home, work, or public places. This makes them a key player in spreading germs. A quick daily wipe with a disinfectant can significantly reduce the risk of transferring germs from person to person. **Wallets and Purses:** We take our wallets, clutches, and handbags with us just about everywhere, but how often do we really disinfect these items? If you're like most people, the answer is probably rarely. The reality is that wallets and purses can pick up germs from various surfaces they come into contact with – which is why it's so important to clean them regularly. **Remote Controls:** Whether for the television, air conditioner, or other electronic devices, remote controls are handled frequently and can harbor bacteria. Given the frequency with which remotes tend to be touched, it's a good idea to add wiping them to your daily chore list.

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United Way of Greater Nashville Powers Pathways to High-Demand Careers



For aspiring line workers in Williamson and Dickson Counties, the path to a stable, high-paying career has become a reality—thanks to scholarship support from United Way of Greater Nashville (UWGN). Through UWGN’s Transformation Fund each student received \$4,750 to cover tuition for the Pre-Apprentice Linework Academy at Columbia State Community College, a program designed to equip students with the hands-on skills needed for success in the utility industry.

In just seven weeks, these students gained the qualifications sought by Middle Tennessee’s utility companies, culminating in a showcase of their abilities at the annual Lineworker Mini Rodeo.

The average salary for a Lineman apprentice in Tennessee is now \$26.43/hour, or \$54,974, with many opportunities for advancement and increased pay based on skill level, location and years of experience. With an 80-85% job placement rate and earning potential that only grows with experience, this partnership between UWGN and Columbia State is opening doors to a life-changing trade—one that empowers individuals and strengthens communities.

Meet Mason:



Standing third from left: Mason from Franklin

When Williamson County student Mason and his mother Tammy went to register him for classes at Columbia State, they spoke with an advisor about how he could enroll in the lineman program. They quickly learned that the program typically costs thousands of dollars—a cost that felt out of reach for Mason’s mother, who was supporting him as a single parent.

Thankfully, Mason’s advisor informed them about a grant through United Way for Williamson County students pursuing a trade instead of a traditional college path. The application process was simple, and with the support of United Way, Mason was able to enroll in the lineman program and follow his passion.

Mason has since completed the program and is now preparing to return to Columbia State for additional CDL training. He has also applied to several local power companies and is eagerly awaiting his next opportunity.

Mason and his mother are incredibly grateful for the support United Way provided, making it possible for him to pursue his dream of becoming a lineman—an opportunity they never imagined possible. “Thank you from the bottom of my heart for all you and United Way does to make a way for those who otherwise wouldn’t have the chance to pursue their dreams,” said Tammy.

Meet Cooper:



Pictured (left to right): United Way of Greater Nashville’s Transformation Fund scholarship recipients Cooper from Dickson and Ethan from Burns.

As a single father with primary guardianship, Mike struggled to find a way to afford the McEwen Lineman School his son, Cooper, had his heart set on attending. While working at Dickson Electric Department, Mike learned during a safety class that Columbia State offered a similar lineman program. Their safety director encouraged him to look into it, and that advice led Mike and Cooper to visit the school.

During their visit, Tiffany Odom, Coordinator of Workforce Training, provided a wonderful tour, even taking them out to the yard to meet instructor Troy Smalling. It was at that moment that Cooper truly fell in love with the idea of becoming a lineman. From the hands-on training to the supportive administration, every step of Cooper’s journey at

Columbia State reinforced that he was in the right place.

Thanks to the scholarship provided through United Way, Cooper was able to enroll in the program without the financial burden weighing on his family. He successfully completed the program, earned his CDL, and is now working in Dickson installing fiber with Ignite Broadband while awaiting the opportunity to step into a full lineman position.

Mike and Cooper are incredibly grateful for the scholarship that made this opportunity possible. The support they received reinforced the meaning of the phrase “it takes a village,” and they deeply appreciate the role United Way played in helping Cooper take the first steps toward his dream career.

In one of the Rodeo activities, students climb up and down an 80-foot pole, which is a necessary part of the TVPPA Climbing Lab Certification. In this activity, Cooper came in third place. “I can’t emphasize this enough the gift of your scholarship was a blessing for my family and Cooper, and I truly appreciate it,” said Mike.

About the scholarship

UWGN’s Transformation Fund is intended to fuel transformational outcomes across the UWGN multi-county footprint by investing in several priority areas, including workforce development. Funding for the Transformation Fund was provided to UWGN by a generous gift from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott.

UWGN and trusted partner Columbia State work together to increase workforce opportunities for those in underserved communities. This partnership opens the door to a life-changing trade. 19 total graduates from five lineworker cohorts have received full scholarships from UWGN’s Transformational Fund.

“To hear first-hand how the funds provided relief for these families is so powerful. Working together with partners, we can truly change the entire trajectory of a life,” added Debby Rainey, UWGN Regional Manager, Community Impact – Williamson, Hickman & Dickson.

—Kria Wiese, Director, Marketing and Communications - United Way of Greater Nashville, www.unitedwaygreaternashville.org – 615-255-8501

Summer Reading for Kids and Youth: Choose Wisely!



If you've been in one line of work long enough, you have a story for almost everything. Years ago, when I was teaching in a traditional school, I assigned Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* for summer reading. When we got to discuss the book, the class was mostly silent. Finally, one student asked why the walls talked. I wanted to scream.

If you've read the book, you know Ray Bradbury wrote it on a typewriter in 1950. He not only predicted in-ear headphones. He predicted massive flat-screen TVs that would cover entire walls. He predicted people would stop reading. He showed us how technology would drain our attention, leaving us strangers to ourselves and one another, with rampant hopelessness,



drug abuse, and suicide. Sound familiar?

But if you don't see why the walls are talking, you're going to miss all that. These kids had big flat screens on their walls at home, but they needed help recognizing their own world in the book. Only then could they begin to see and feel everything else Bradbury had to show them about their world. I wasted that opportunity by assigning the book at the wrong time and by not preparing them to connect with it. It wasn't interesting to them, and it certainly wasn't fun.

Many schools and programs like to pack their summer reading lists with classics. I love classics. I believe kids should read them. But for most people, summer reading is independent reading. First, choose something your child will be capable of enjoying on their own.

Here are several factors I consider, in order:

Relatable characters: Will my child enjoy imagining themselves in this story as they read? This doesn't mean all your main characters have to be young teenagers, but there needs to be something that will grab your reader's imagination.

Comprehensible plot: Can my child independently understand what is happening? If so, they'll be able to enjoy suspense and start rooting for the charac-

ters. If there are frequent passages that require outside help or lots of historical context to understand, save it for an in-class read.

Future discussion value: Once they enjoy the plot and characters, are there deeper ideas we can talk about later?

"Now I know what a good book can be."

Choosing a great book doesn't educate anyone by itself, but the experience a child has with that book can change everything.

I recently brought another group of students back to *Fahrenheit 451*. This time, we read it mostly together in small chunks, often out loud, unpacking key passages as we went. Before long, they caught on and began unpacking many of these passages on their own. At that point, I could see them beginning to enjoy the book for themselves. And that is what we want, after all, isn't it?

—A classroom veteran, George Rietz encourages teachers, teaches homeschoolers, and invents new tools to reshape education. Contact him through ExploreMyWriting.com.



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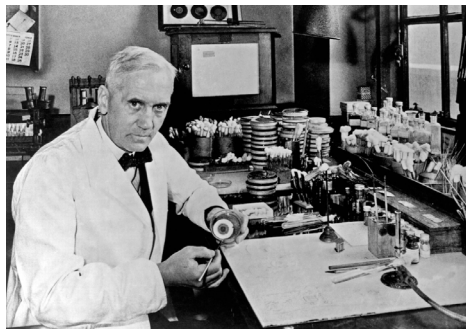
(from left) Jim Daly, Chuck Swindoll, Anne Graham Lotz, Allen Jackson, Alistair Begg, Adrian Rogers, Tony Evans, Charles Stanley, Dave & Anne Wilson, Michael Youssef, Robert Jeffress and many more!

Most Everything Around Us, Is Profoundly Connected Within Us

Years ago, I learned a profound story about two unlikely young boys, who became inspiring, famous individuals, each saving millions of lives in their own way. They courageously embraced their unique callings as they arrived on the world scene in the early 1900s.



The story begins in England, where several huge bogs formed deep into the earth, much like sinkholes found in Tennessee. These bogs are treacherous, and as the story unfolds, a young boy, nicknamed Fleming wandered onto a neighbor's farm, exploring the terrain. Unfortunately, as Fleming approached



a bog, appearing in the mammoth hole, his foot slipped, and he quickly tumbled down into his great discovery, which unfortunately was about to become his grave! This youngster began to yell with all his strength believing that surely someone would hear him, but he was far away from any other human. It had now been several hours and dusk began and just by chance, Mr. C, the owner of the small farm went out of his house to gather a couple of his animals, when suddenly he thought he heard a faint yell in the distance.

Mr. C wasn't sure of what was happening, so we quickly gathered his animals in the shed and ventured out in the dark in the direction of the sound toward the distant woods. As he stumbled along in the dark path, the cry for help became slightly louder, and Mr. C desperately searched until he came to the spot where the sound appeared to come from deep within the bog. Mr. C vaguely saw a youngster stuck deep in the bog and he desperately stretched his body into the bog, twisting his foot around a large root, but he could not reach the young-

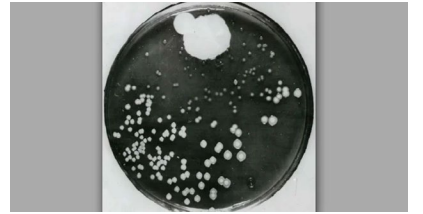


ster. Mr. C said to the young man hold tight while he ran back to the farmhouse for a rope. Fortunately, he was able to do so, and once again leaned into the deep hole with his rope and pull the young man to safety. Mr. C carried the young boy, who he now recognized as a member of the prominent Fleming family, to his home, where Mrs. C cleaned and bandaged him. After dinner, Mr. C brought Fleming back to his parents' estate.

Early the next morning, Prime Minister Fleming escorted his elaborate horse-driven stagecoach to the simple home of Mr. C, seeking to find a way to reward him for his amazing heroic deed. Mr. C would not accept a reward for what he did; the Prime Minister, requesting permission of Mr. and Mrs. C, offered Mr. C's son the same educational opportunity that he planned to provide for his own son. The boys became close friends, attending the best schools in England. Their paths diverged, but they remained in touch through the years.



Perhaps you may recall the young Fleming became a renowned scientist and physician who eventually discovered penicillin, saving thousands at the time and millions and millions over the decades. Quite coincidentally, in the early development of his serum, not yet named penicillin, Fleming traveled for many hours through the cold winter stormy day, and into the night to visit his long-time childhood friend who had become gravely ill and near death. When Fleming arrived late that evening, he provided his penicillin serum to his beloved friend.



Miraculously, Mr. C recovered and the name Mr. C is a nickname for the well-recognized and greatly revered and loved throughout the world as Winston Churchill, England's greatest leader and most renowned and courageous Prime Minister.

Dr. Alexander Fleming, whose life was once saved by Churchill's father, never forgot the deep kindness of the Churchill family and now he proudly crafted his opportunity to save Churchill's son, Winston, who had become his lifelong best friend. Fleming joined Winston and his wife for morning coffee.

Perhaps the most interesting "antidote" over the last 35 years, is the tremendous growth in professional understanding of science and psychology especially through the plethora of new learning and knowledge in eastern medicine, as it enlightens us with the understanding within "acupuncture without needles" as this became the foundational principle of energy psychology which incredibly and holistic connects the infinite number of intricacies within our mind, body, soul, and emotions present in all human beings. Within each of us there are 360, plus/minus acupoints, with 14 meridian pathways, and several chakras.

With excitement and great hope, we arrive at a point where we can harness this energy, often referred to as emotional freedom strategies of energy psychology, when properly formulated, creates for the first time a most unusual opportunity for genuine healing not only for many physical ailments, but especially impacting the numerous emotional traumas, fears, and PTSD, as well as many other sufferings which plague the human spirit. This profound new learning/healing is rightfully and respectfully referred to, as the "New Emotional Penicillin"! Now you have the rest of the story!



—To speak with Dr. Tim Lynch, PhD., you can call him at 615-504-4357, or email him at tdlynch@bellsouth.net
If you want to know more about Dr. Tim check out Psychology Today Practice Directory, or his web: www.thelynchgroup.net



PARENT WITH PURPOSE

Reading the Bible with Your Child



We've been exploring spiritual disciplines. In February and April, we looked at how to incorporate discipleship into your daily rhythms and overcome obstacles. This month, we'll focus on the discipline of reading the Bible. Knowing that Bible study is essential to your child's spiritual growth and to learning more about God should be the impetus to get started.

Model Bible study. If reading the Bible is important to you, it will be to your kids. Your child needs to see you reading the Scriptures, discussing them, grappling with them, and applying them. Share what you're learning or struggling with at dinner. Talk about the changes you're making because of what you read. Share a new name you learned for the Holy Spirit. These small lessons reap big rewards.



Furnish the right tools. Your kids need a Bible written with them in mind. In 2024, Tyndale released the Go Bible in the New Living Translation. It's for kids ages 8-12 and offers all kinds of help alongside the biblical text. For younger kids, read Bible storybooks or devotions. A teenager can graduate to a study Bible.

BODY & SOUL

The Thirst for Nearness

Children are often the thirstiest when their mother is in the room. Every mother knows this through lived experience: our children are their "most real" selves with the caregivers who are present the most. My daughter might hide her pain or fear from a babysitter, putting on a brave face and "sucking it up" when I'm away. But the



moment I am near, she no longer has to hide. She runs to me in her need because my presence is her permission to be vulnerable.

In the same way, we have a Father who provides for His children. True intimacy with our Father is built the same way: our neediness is amplified in His presence. When we are thirsty, we realize more than ever that our Father is capable of giving us water so that we may "thirst no more." It is in the raw, unpolished moments of our dependency that bring our awareness to His Fatherly provision. We move beyond mere 'religion' and into a resilient, living friendship with the Creator, when we are honest about our needs.

He is constantly at work throughout the world, tending to heartache and sickness. We are a needy people. When Jesus walked among us, His nearness made us realize just how deep our dependency was. Like moths drawn to a light, the weary and the broken swarmed Him (Mark 3:7-12). They didn't follow Him

Engage with the text. If your family already reads Scripture together, ask questions. Doing so will give you a better sense of your child's understanding. You are training them to ask who, what, where, when, why, and how of the text. Encourage them to write in their Bible, circle key words, and highlight verses to memorize. These are valuable lessons for now, and as your kids age and become independent readers.

Pray. We often pray after reading the Bible, but what if we prayed before reading? Ask God to open hearts and minds to understand the scriptures before you read. By doing this, you're inviting the Holy Spirit to work in your children's hearts and minds. Your kids will be more alert to what God might reveal to them through the Word. Again, you're modeling the discipline of asking God to help your family grow in wisdom and understanding and of developing lifelong habits.

Provide prompts. Let's face it. Starting new habits is hard. But prompts like an alarm clock get us out of bed in the morning. Setting out nice clothes the night before reminds us about tomorrow's picture day. What prompt could you use for reading the Bible? Would setting a Bible on the kitchen table the evening before remind you to read the next morning? Maybe something like a watering can (you're watering the seeds sown)? You know what works best for your family.

I'd love to hear how your family fits daily Bible reading into your routines. If you've tried it, let me know how it went by contacting me at my website www.sallycressman.com.

—Sally Cressman is the author of *The Dance of Easter*.
Sign up for her email list to receive
"31 Empowering Biblical Affirmations" cards.



because they were healthy or whole; they followed Him because they were desperate for His touch (Matthew 9:20-22; Mark 2:1-17).

Moms, does that sound familiar? Just as my daughter's needs become louder when I walk through the door, God's nearness makes us more acutely aware of our own hunger and exhaustion. In the light of His sufficiency and power, we realize that nothing in this world truly compares (Philippians 3:8). We actually feel weaker in His presence (Matthew 11:28-30), not because He diminishes us, but because only in that vulnerable closeness can we make room for His sufficient Grace (2 Cor 12:9). He does not heal by shouting from a distance. He lays His hands on us, looking us in the face. That is the intimacy His power requires.

Thankfully, God became man and understands exactly what this dependency feels like. He wept in the garden; He was tempted in the wilderness; He was moved to anger by injustice. He knows our limits and longs to restore us to a "perpetual spring." His heart is set on the restoration of all Creation, beginning with us.

He is a caretaking God—mending, feeding, healing, and washing. We see this in the Word, and we see it in the evidence of His Providence all around us today.

—Meg Strickland is a wife and mother of three girls. She was born and raised in Nashville, TN. Meg earned a master's degree in Political Management from George Washington University, before settling in Marietta, GA.

Spiritual Goal for May

JOIN...me in prayer.

Lord Jesus, as we try to imagine how awesome You are...our praises just seem to bubble up from our soul. Right now, our thoughts are about the majesty of You creating the universe with its complexities...the planets...the sun...the stars...galaxies... day and night...the four seasons...the gravitational pull of the moon making the ebb and flow of the sea waves...the ecosystem...the animals, birds, fish...microscopic beings that serve Your purposes and making life sustainable on planet earth.

Lord, we could go on for hours letting our mind freely express the amazing wonders we recognize in Your powers...Your beauty...Your intelligence...and of course Your love for us...Your grace and mercy that transformed us from spiritual blindness to a person caught up in Your Light.

Lord Jesus, thank You for giving us this time to JUST TALK TO YOU. We need to always remember that You want to listen and talk with us. Feeling Your presence through the Holy Spirit gives us a spiritual...an emotional and even a physical HIGH... that NOTHING in this world compares to. Yes, we are in AWE and want to join with our friends in telling You that it is AN OUT OF THIS WORLD EXPERIENCE to really know and love You.

Lord, thank You for our time together...this conversation...as You love us more than we love ourselves and know us better than we know ourselves. You TRULY KNOW JUST WHAT WE NEED. Let it be so PLEASE. We ask by speaking Your Name Lord Jesus. AMEN.

—Ralph E. Vaughn

PLAN OF SALVATION

Has something in the magazine or something you have discussed with someone or some thoughts that you have had or something that you have heard, brought you to a point of realizing that you want and need to know Christ in the truest and personal sense?

If so, below is a simple outline for someone of any age who is not a Believer to act on their desire to accept Jesus Christ into their heart as their Savior.

God's Plan of Salvation

God created us to honor and serve Him

Revelation 4:11: "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created"

Each of us has sinned against God

Romans 3:10: As it is written, "There is none righteous, no, not one"
Romans 3:23: For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

The penalty for sin is eternal separation from God and Heaven

Romans 6:23: For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Good works cannot ever earn God's forgiveness and Salvation

Titus 3:5: not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us.

God loves each of us

John 3:16: For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Jesus Christ died on the cross in our place, paying the penalty for our sin

Romans 5:8: But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

We each must accept Jesus Christ as our personal Savior

Romans 10:9: that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:13: For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

To accept Christ into your heart and life, pray a simple prayer along these lines -

"Dear God, I know that I am a sinner and I am sorry for my sins. I know that Jesus died for my sins and the sins of the world. Right now, I ask Jesus into my heart and receive Him as my personal Savior. Forgive me of my sins, thank you for saving me through the blood of Jesus. Please Lord, help me live for you. In Jesus name, amen."

All scriptures are taken from The New King James Version of the Holy Bible.

If you do not have your own Bible, email publisher@nashchristian.com and we will make sure you receive one.

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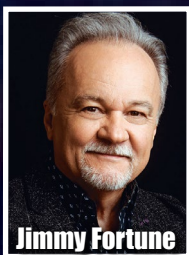
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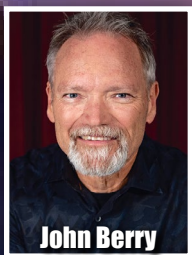
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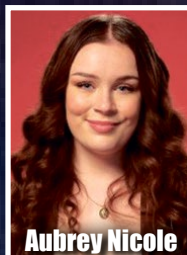
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