

November 2026

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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

Beyond Thanksgiving Dinner: Remembering the Greatest Gift

“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.” – John 3:16 (NKJV)

A Thanksgiving Reflection

Thanksgiving is a time when families gather, favorite foods are served, and we enjoy the traditions that make this holiday special. Between preparing the meal, visiting with loved ones, and watching football, the day can pass quickly. Yet Thanksgiving also gives us an opportunity to stop and consider the many reasons we have to thank God.

The blessings we enjoy extend far beyond what we see on our dinner tables. The beauty of the natural world, the changing seasons, the people who enrich our lives, and the daily provisions we sometimes take for granted all remind us of God's goodness. Even in difficult seasons, there is much to appreciate when we take time to recognize His presence and faithfulness.

Above all, we have reason to be thankful for the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ. John 3:16 reminds us of the depth of God's love for humanity. He gave His Son so that we might receive forgiveness and the promise of everlasting life. Through Christ's sacrifice and resurrection, we have a hope that reaches beyond our circumstances and even beyond this life. No earthly blessing can compare with this gift of grace.

Thanksgiving also reminds us to look beyond our own homes and consider those who may be facing loneliness, hardship, or uncertainty. A kind word, a shared meal, a helping hand, or a thoughtful visit can make a meaningful difference. When we show compassion to others, we put our gratitude into action and demonstrate the love of Christ.

As we celebrate Thanksgiving this year, let us enjoy the fellowship and traditions we cherish while keeping our hearts focused on the One who makes every blessing possible. True thanksgiving is not limited to a holiday or a meal. It is an attitude of the heart that recognizes God's goodness and responds with faith, generosity, and praise.

May this Thanksgiving bring your family closer together and renew your appreciation for God's abundant blessings. And above all, may you find lasting peace and hope in the greatest gift of all—Jesus Christ.

Robert Stringfellow, Publisher, 615-815-8765
publisher@nashchristian.com





ON THE COVER 20

Kasey, Shauntelle, Simone, and Alexandria share inspiring stories of faith, hope, and restoration through The Salvation Army Nashville Area Command. From overcoming addiction and homelessness to rebuilding after devastating loss, their journeys reveal how compassion, practical support, and God's love can transform lives. Discover how each found renewed strength, stability, and a path toward a brighter future. See page 20 to learn more.

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With 5 major companies, Phil Barfoot's ministry reaches literally around the world. Each ministry is designed to encourage and motivate the Body of Christ to dream big, think outside the box and reach as many people as possible with the good news of Jesus Christ.

November 2026

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SPREAD CHEER!

During Season of Sharing, United Way and Hands On encourage all Middle Tennesseans to show their community some love by volunteering and giving back!

Whatever giving means to you – sharing meals, helping with festive events, fulfilling a nonprofit's wish list, or donating to support Middle Tennessee families – we can help you find the perfect way to connect with those around you and show you care.



Scan here to discover meaningful ways you can spread cheer this season.

A Requiem For Paris



Ahh, Paris! A city revered for its centuries-long contribution to the arts, music, poetry and a centerpiece of western culture is on the brink of collapse from within. The “City of Light” has been replaced with the unthinkable lament “Paris brûle!” News reports of the widespread devastation from the violent protests depict a grim, dark chaos as hordes descend on churches, city landmarks, statues and monuments that have withstood two world wars.

What began as peaceful student protests over claimed deficiencies in the educational system quickly morphed into a guerre opportune for Islamic extremists to unleash attacks aimed at destroying symbols of western civilization, and in particular, any representations of French culture.

The turmoil has been brewing for several decades, as a consequence of failed leadership dating back to DeGaulle, who predicted in the late-50s that trouble lay ahead unless immigration were controlled. Those since have downplayed traditional French values of patriotism and opted instead to experiment with an open border policy ushering in millions of immigrants, many from African-based countries. The myth perpetuated by such laissez faire policies, is that by offering free welfare benefits to all immigrants they will assimilate, show their gratitude and embrace liberté, égalité and fraternité. But these noble

western concepts have never been a part of the political landscape in Somalia, Congo, Morocco or Tunisia where about 60% of all Africa-born immigrants in France originate. They are as foreign to these foreigners as the notion of election integrity free of corruption. Theirs is not a nation of laws, but of coups and violent power struggles. Is it any surprise that they would see this as the norm for their host country as well? The blame for this current catastrophe cannot be laid solely at the feet of French politicians.

For the last several generations, France has celebrated its secularism, breaking the ancient “bonds of Christianity and the church.” This national sentiment has infected all strata of French society, and national disdain for anything religious is today a hallmark of French government. If there is any doubt how deep this religious apartheid pervades modern French views of Christianity, one need look no further than the opening 2024 Olympic ceremony. On a world-wide stage, France opened this international event with a blasphemous portrayal of the Lord’s Supper portrayed as a conspicuous tribute to gay pride. The symbolism followed a string of satanic rituals culminating in a grotesque parody of Leonardo Da Vinci’s “The Last Supper” mural of Jesus and his apostles composed of drag queens who struck poses behind a long table astride a crowned transgender goddess. The grotesque mockery sparked an international outcry and criticism from every corner of Christendom. But the message was unmistakable. The French are not only indifferent to Christianity; they belittle it as an anachronism, not merely the opiate of the masses, but odious to the serious-minded. The latest outpouring of

support during Pope Leo XIV’s recent visit to Paris, especially among the young adults, may be a small flicker of hope.

Many political commentators have weighed in with grandiose explanations for the “fall of France”. While it is true there is no shortage of likely suspects, the most obvious account seems to have escaped elucidation. Some will discount this comment as an over-spiritualization. But I cannot not help but see the irony. Gal. 6:7 tells us “Be not deceived; God will not be mocked.” These depraved attacks upon Paris by forces within is a modern-day re-enactment of the fall of Rome. But the ultimate target of this wave of destruction is not France, it is western civilization. Already, similar disruptions are taking place in Italy and the UK. Will New York City, the home of an Islamic-led administration be next?

Most of my legal career has been devoted to defending the right of those who seek to influence their local culture with the message of the gospel. One of these cases, soon to be tried before a federal jury, involves an evangelist who was arrested for spreading gospel message in a city park during an LGBTQ celebration. Jury selection will be challenging in this case due in large part to a prevailing secularist attitude today toward open evangelism.

—Larry L. Crain, www.Crainlaw.legal



MISSION MAKERS

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Lee Company Launches Annual Vans4Cans Food Drive

Lee Company is kicking off its annual Vans4Cans food drive October 19, continuing a tradition that has helped provide food to neighbors in need for more than 15 years.



Through November 20, Lee Company technicians will collect canned goods and nonperishable food items from customers during service calls. Community members can also make virtual donations at leecompany.com/vans4cans. This year’s drive will benefit food banks across Tennessee, Alabama, Kentucky, and Georgia. Since Vans4Cans began, Lee Company employees and customers

have collected more than 468,000 pounds of food to help neighbors facing hunger. “Vans4Cans is one of the ways our employees give back to the communities we call home.” said Emily Bonomo, Director of Community Engagement at Lee Company. “It’s so rewarding to see the shared impact we can make together in our neighborhoods. And the local food banks we partner with put each of those collected cans to work to help local families.” Collected food will be delivered to local food bank partners on November 24. To learn more or make a virtual donation, visit leecompany.com/vans4cans.

About Lee Company: Founded by Leon Lee in 1944, Lee Company is an award-winning,

family-owned home services, facilities, and mechanical engineering company with more than 1,800 employees. Today, Lee Company is one of Tennessee’s largest mechanical contractors and a trusted provider of comprehensive solutions and services for homes and facilities. Lee Company’s home services include plumbing, electrical, heating and air conditioning, home improvements, and appliance repair. The company also provides facility services and solutions for government, institutional, commercial, healthcare, and industrial organizations.

—Tiffany Stinson – Communications and B2B Marketing Supervisor, www.leecompany.com



Small Practices of Worship in the Family



The Institute for Family Studies and Communio jointly found that small spiritual practices woven into daily family life can have a major impact. One of those practices should be worship. Many people think of worship as the one hour we spend on Sunday morning, but what if it could be as simple as praying before each meal? Your family can weave worship into the daily routines you already have.

Why do we worship? It starts with God. We were made to worship the one true living God. The more your kids know about Him, the more likely worship will come naturally to them. Throughout

your week, mention God’s provision or protection. On the car ride home from church, ask questions about the sermon or the story taught. Relate the Bible story to what your child is going through or needs at the moment. In the story of David and Goliath, we see that God gave David strength and courage. Remind your kids that even if they are small or young, they can still be strong and courageous with God’s help. The more you point them to God’s work and presence in their lives, the more likely they are to praise Him.

How do we worship? As we’ve discussed, worship can be formal, like we experience it on Sunday morning, but it can also look like:

- Thanking God for a beautiful sunrise, His provision, or His creation
- Choosing to obey Him
- Encouraging your child to give a percentage of their allowance to the church
- Singing the Doxology or any song about God
- Reading your Bible and reflecting on God’s grace and goodness
- Praying the Lord’s Prayer, mealtime prayers, or anytime prayers

Keep it simple. Think about how to weave worship into what you are already doing. Do you find yourself stuck in Nashville traffic? Listen to a Christian radio station such as K-LOVE 97.1, WayFM 88.7, or Air1 Worship 94.1. Pick one day a week to share three things or people you are thankful for. As you walk and talk, remind your child that God is with them. God sees them. God cares about them. Then pray for your child. When you drop them off at school, say: “You are fearfully and wonderfully made.” Take your child to Sunday morning worship with you. He might not be ready to sit for the whole hour, so start with 30 minutes of the service, then drop him off at child care.

Whatever you decide as a family, keep worship simple and practical, but remember it’s also an attitude of the heart. What you spend your time and money on shows your children more about what you value and worship than anything you say. A humbling thought, isn’t it?

—Sally Cressman is an author and freelance writer. Sign up for her newsletter at www.SallyCressman.com and receive “31 Prayers for Grandchildren.”



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Is 2027 the Year to Go All-In? What the Presidential Cycle Really Tells Investors

A Q&A with Michael R. Wallin, CFP®, LUTCE, Optivise Advisory Services

Q: What is the presidential cycle?

It's the idea that stock returns follow the rhythm of a four-year presidential term. Market historian Yale Hirsch popularized it in 1967. The reasoning: presidents tend



to push their hardest policies early in a term, then work to boost the economy as the next election approaches. Since 1950, the S&P 500 has averaged a 17.2% price gain in year three, compared with just 4.6% in the midterm year, according to Opening Bell Daily (October 17, 2026).

Q: Why is everyone talking about year three?

Because its record has been unusually steady. Since 1950, the S&P 500 has declined in only two pre-election years, 2011 and 2015, and both losses were under 1%.

Q: So should clients chase the market in 2027?

For most families, no. Averages hide wide swings, and history doesn't promise the future. Even the averages depend on who's counting: measured from 1928 instead of 1950, GuruFocus puts the year-three average closer to 14%. In 2008, an elec-

tion year, the index lost 38.5%. The cycle doesn't call every year. Overhauling a sound strategy to chase one year's pattern adds timing risk. My first question back is simple: Has your investment goal changed?

Q: The market is already up this year. Does that change anything?

It might change your allocation. As of October 26, the stock market was up 11.4% for 2026, according to GuruFocus, roughly three times the 3.7% average for a midterm year since 1928. A strong run can quietly push your stock holdings past your target. That's a signal to rebalance, not a reason to take on more risk.

Q: What should investors do instead?

Four practical steps:

- Rebalance, don't restructure. If a rally pushes your stock allocation past your target, trim winners and rebalance into fixed income.
- Watch the economy, not the calendar. Inflation, interest rates, corporate earnings, and global events outweigh any cycle trend.
- Measure against your plan, not the index. Your results may differ from the headlines, better or worse, based on your diversification.
- Make your giving strategic. If markets rise, consider taking your required minimum

distribution while prices are elevated. If you're 70½ or older, qualified charitable distributions (QCDs) from your IRA can support your tithing and giving.

Q: How does faith shape your approach?

Proverbs 16:8 says it well: "Better a little with righteousness than much gain with injustice." We build diversified, long-term portfolios of companies our clients are proud to own, with every dollar tied to a purpose and a strategy.

Q: What's the best first step?

Before the 2027 headlines start, review your allocation, your giving strategy, and whether your investments reflect your convictions. With more than 20 years of experience guiding faith-driven families, our team can help you build a plan and stay the course.

Schedule your review today: 855.378.1806

—Michael Wallin - With more than three decades in financial services, Michael Wallin and the team at Optivise Advisory Services help families align their finances with their faith.



Investment advisory services are offered through Optivise Advisory Services, LLC (Optivise)



O Night Divine

With John Chisum & Friends

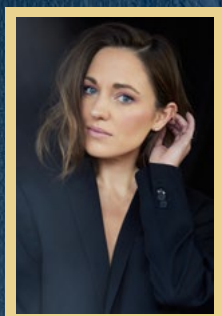
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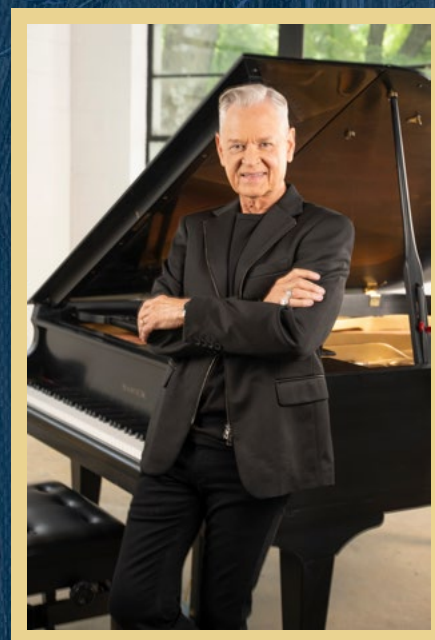


Andrew Greer



Laura Osnes

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How Trevecca Prepares Students for the Fastest-Growing Careers in Tech and Healthcare

USA Today recently released job growth predictions for the coming decade, highlighting key industries set to expand between now and 2035. Healthcare and technology are at the center of the up-and-coming job market, driven by increasing automation, the rise of artificial intelligence and changing demographics. Trevecca Nazarene University offers exceptional degree options that align with these growth sectors—located in one of the nation’s fastest-growing tech and healthcare hubs.



Healthcare Support: Projected Growth of 13.3%

As the population ages and caring professionals become more valued in an age of automation, healthcare support positions are rapidly increasing and are among the most stable.

- **Nursing:** Trevecca offers tailored pathways for students looking to enter this important healthcare field in all stages of their lives. Traditional undergraduates can complete a Bachelor of Science in nursing (BSN) on campus, while adult students can pursue an Associate of Science in nursing (ASN) and/or a BSN degree, both available as hybrid programs for working adults.
- **Healthcare Administration:** Available at both the bachelor’s and master’s levels, Trevecca’s healthcare administration programs prepare students to lead in business and operations. Graduates learn to navigate administrative challenges, optimize for organizational efficiency and advocate for quality patient care.

Healthcare Practitioners and Technicians: Projected Growth of 8%

In the next decade, skilled practitioners and tech-

nical specialists will become increasingly essential to meeting clinical demand nationwide and caring for patients in ways that don’t involve automation.

- **Physician Assistant (PA):** Home to the first and longest-established physician assistant program in the state of Tennessee, Trevecca has a rich history of educating highly skilled servant leaders. Trevecca PAs can expect to graduate with top-tier clinical expertise and diverse clinical training opportunities as they join the nation’s fastest-growing healthcare field.
- **Pre-Physical Therapy Track:** Students in Trevecca’s exercise science program with a concentration in pre-physical therapy complete three practicums and meet all prerequisite requirements to prepare for graduate school. They have the opportunity to seamlessly transition from undergraduate study into doctoral coursework as a result of a partnership with Campbellsville University’s Doctor of Chiropractic program.

Community and Social Service: Projected Growth of 7.4%

Across the country, organizations and communities require skilled, empathetic professionals to address complex social needs and support vulnerable populations.

- **Social Work:** Students in Trevecca’s Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) and new Master of Social Work (MSW) programs are equipped to empower marginalized individuals, advocate for systemic change and serve communities in need. The University maintains a robust network of field placements across the Southeast, helping students make an impact in the areas they are most passionate about.
- **Social Justice:** The B.S. in civic engagement and restorative justice and the B.S. in nonprof-

it administration and social entrepreneurship are interdisciplinary degrees that prepare future leaders to analyze complex societal issues and implement community-focused solutions. Students participate in poverty alleviation practices and gain hands-on experience through Trevecca’s Urban Farm and Neighborhood Empowerment Program.

Computer and Mathematical Occupations: Projected Growth of 7.3%

To compete in an increasingly tech-driven economy, companies in every sector require experts who can navigate a rapidly-evolving technology landscape.

Trevecca’s growing School of STEM offers both associate and bachelor’s degrees in mathematics and computer science. Students study theory in the classroom then put their learning into practice through exceptional undergraduate research opportunities, including:

- **Near-Space Research Program:** Professors and students work together to design, build and launch high-altitude research balloons to altitudes exceeding 120,000 feet.
- **Magnetic Imaging Research:** Students gain hands-on experience operating a SQUID (Superconducting Quantum Interference Device).
- **Applied Learning Labs:** Courses utilize an on-campus cadaver lab, farm, greenhouse and modern computing facilities to assist students in building a strong professional portfolio.

Complete lists of graduate and undergraduate programs at Trevecca can be found at trevecca.edu.

—Rebekah Warren,
Senior Copywriter - Office of
Marketing and Communications
Trevecca Nazarene University,
www.trevecca.edu



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Here’s what these awesome partners have to say about their experience with Nashville Christian Family:

“Working with Robert Stringfellow and *Nashville Christian Family Magazine* for the past two years has been an incredible blessing. Robert has a gift for seeing people—not just businesses, brands, or titles, but the heart behind the work. Through his thoughtful storytelling and genuine approach, he has helped showcase not only my business, but also who I am as a human being, which I believe is so important in a time when people crave authenticity and real connection. Robert has been more than a partner in media—he has become a trusted friend. His professionalism, integrity, and ability to highlight purpose-driven stories have made our collaboration meaningful and impactful. I am deeply grateful for the relationship we’ve built and for the platform he has given me to share my journey with the Nashville community. Thank you so much Robert!”

—Eva Angelina Romero, Broker/Owner – Century 21 Capital Properties, Co-Founder and Professional Relations Director – Solace Implant Center and Oral Surgery



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SONGWRITING

Lead Communicator: Jeff Bumgardner



Jeff is a top songwriter for a major music publisher, has been nominated for over thirty GMA Dove Awards, winning eight of them, is a highly sought after songwriting coach, advisor, clinician, speaker, and author.

This five-day intensive explores the craft of songwriting. Designed for writers at every level - from someone working on their first song to experienced and published writers - this course examines what makes a song memorable, singable, emotionally compelling, and lasting.

TOPICS: THE STRUCTURE OF A GREAT SONG, THE LANGUAGE OF A GREAT SONG, THE MELODY OF A GREAT SONG, THE ANATOMY OF A GREAT SONG, THE CREATION OF A GREAT SONG (Your song will be recorded by professional musicians at Studio78 during our workshop)

ARRANGING / ORCHESTRATING

Lead Communicator: Cliff Duren



Cliff Duren is the Executive Pastor of Music & Worship at First Baptist Church Dallas, TX. He has also served in multiple roles at First Baptist Church Woodstock, GA and Brentwood Baptist Church in the Nashville area. In addition, Cliff is a song writer, arranger, orchestrator, and producer for various church music publishers and Christian artists.

He is, without a doubt, the most prolific and in-demand arranger/orchestrator in the Christian music business.

Cliff is a five-time Dove Award winner for his contributions in Christian music and enjoys being a guest speaker, worship leader, and clinician at multiple events each year.

This five-day intensive explores the craft of arranging and orchestrating. Composers of every level are welcome as we walk through various ways to approach a vocal arrangement. Then, we'll breakdown each section of the orchestra and explore how they work together in any given orchestration.

TOPICS: ARRANGING, VOCAL ARRANGING, ORCHESTRATION - STRINGS & WOODWINDS, ORCHESTRATION - BRASS & PERCUSSION, ARRANGING & ORCHESTRATING - PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

MUSIC BUSINESS / ENTREPRENEURIAL

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Ryan Dahl (PraiseCharts), Daniel Semsen (Sensen Music),
Mike Harland (Worship Essentials Network)
Luke Gambill (Lee University), Craig Adams (Trevecca University),
Larry Grayson (Ouachita Baptist University) & David Hahn (Liberty University)



In a world where there are fewer and fewer opportunities for full-time employment in the Christian music business, you will be inspired to look for unique opportunities and to "create your own" dreams and vision and to find a need and fill it.

You will hear the personal testimonies and life-stories of the top leaders in the industry who God has used to create unique and successful products and have employed many others in taking their ministry to the next level.

You will also learn the details of how to start a company from A to Z.

TOPICS: DREAMING BIG, THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX, WORKING WITH INTEGRITY, BLAZING YOUR OWN TRAIL (CREATING YOUR OWN OPPORTUNITIES), KEEPING YOUR EYE ON THE BALL, KEEPING YOUR FOCUS ON MAKING A DIFFERENCE, ALLOWING GOD TO LEAD YOU IN YOUR CAREER, LEARNING THE TRAITS OF A TRUE ENTREPRENEUR, HOW TO START A COMPANY FROM A TO Z

STUDIO ENGINEERING

Lead Communicator: Daewoo Kim



Daewoo is a top recording engineer in Nashville with more than 25 years of experience in audio recording.

His credits include:

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The Christian Widow Who Made Thanksgiving a National Holiday

You may be surprised to learn that the person most responsible for Thanksgiving becoming a national holiday wasn't a Pilgrim. She never set foot on the Mayflower. She was a widowed mom of five named Sarah Josepha Hale, and her story is one every Christian family needs to hear because it didn't come out of abundance. It came out of grief.

Sarah Hale's Story: A Widow's Journey of Faith

Sarah married a young attorney named David Hale in 1813. He encouraged her writing and tutored her in the evenings, and they were building a real life together. Then, while she was pregnant with their fifth child, David caught pneumonia and died suddenly. Just like that, Sarah was thirty-four, widowed, and raising five kids on her own.



She tried opening a hat shop first. It didn't work out. So she turned to the one thing she'd been quietly good at since childhood: writing. Her mother had homeschooled her, and her brother used to share his Dartmouth textbooks so she could learn alongside him. That early education became her lifeline. She began publishing poems and stories, and eventually became editor of Godey's Lady's Book, the most-read magazine in America at the time, reaching an amazing 150,000 households a month. I'm sure you remember one of her poems, "Mary Had a Little Lamb."

Sarah would have had every right to use that platform on bitterness, or just to keep her family afloat. Instead, she spent the next few decades on one quiet, stubborn campaign: getting the United States to set aside a single day, every year, just to give thanks to God. I believe it was God's will promoting her.

Sarah Hale's 17-Year Fight for a National Thanksgiving Day



She wrote to five presidents. Four said no. She kept writing anyway for seventeen years, insisting that a nation as blessed and as divided as hers (just as it is today) needed one shared day to say thank you to God. She believed gratitude wasn't just a nice feeling. But it was strong enough to help heal a broken country.

Then, in September 1863, in the middle of the Civil War, she wrote one more letter. This time to Abraham Lincoln. Five days later, he issued the Thanksgiving Proclamation, setting the last Thursday of November aside as a National Day of Thanksgiving and prayer.

A widow who had every reason to stop believing gratitude changed anything ended up giving a grieving, divided nation a permanent reason to thank God together.

What Sarah Hale Teaches Us About Thanksgiving Gratitude

Sarah Hale's Thanksgiving wasn't a cozy Norman Rockwell painting. It came out of real loss. That's exactly why it's worth telling around your own table this year. Gratitude isn't just for families whose lives look easy right now. It's something we can choose in the middle of hardship, and Scripture doesn't

just suggest this, it commands it: "*give thanks in all circumstances*" (1 Thesalonians 5:18). Not just the comfortable ones. That's my favorite go-to verse because it lifts me up when the devil tries to bring me down.

Christian Thanksgiving Traditions: Father, Son, and Spirit



Honor God the Father — the Giver behind every gift. Before the meal, go around the table and have everyone name one specific thing from this past year they didn't earn or expect — a job, a healing, a friendship that came out of nowhere. James 1:17 calls these "good and perfect" gifts straight from the Father. Write them on paper and create a "harvest basket," and let the kids keep it up through Advent as a reminder.

Honor Jesus the Son — the reason we can approach God at all. It's easy for Thanksgiving to turn into gratitude aimed at no one in particular. Include Jesus. Read Luke 17:11-19, the ten lepers Jesus healed, and the one who came back to say thank you. Ask honestly: which of the nine are we most like on a normal day? Then thank Jesus by name for one specific way He's changed your family this year.

Honor the Holy Spirit — the One who actually produces gratitude in us. Thankfulness itself is fruit of the Spirit's work (Galatians 5:22-23), not something we just muster up by trying harder. Pray together and ask the Spirit to grow specific gratitude in each person for the year ahead. It turns Thanksgiving from just looking backward into a real prayer for what God wants to grow in the future.

Sarah Hale's family's loss became the seed of a whole nation's habit of thanking God. This year let's go a little deeper and name not just the blessings but the Father, Son, and Spirit standing behind every one of them.



—Lee Ann Mancini is the author of *Raising Kids to Follow Christ: Instilling a Lifelong Trust in God*, founder of *Raising Christian Kids*, adjunct professor at South Florida Bible College & Theological Seminary, and executive producer of the animated series *Sea Kids on Right Now Media*, *Pure Flix*, *Answers.tv*, *Minno*, and *Yippee*





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To hear the stories of lives changed and to learn how you can Give With Joy through volunteering or donating this Christmas, scan the QR Code or visit SalvationArmyNashville.org

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How GeekCause Helps Volunteers Put Their Skills to Work for Nashville

Volunteer spotlight: Cyrus shares how a year-long GeekCause project helped Tucker's House strengthen its systems and expand its impact.



For Cyrus, GeekCause represents something essential about middle Tennessee: a community full of people with different talents who are willing to use those talents to lift up others. From musicians and clinicians to technologists and problem-solvers, Nashville is home to people who bring their best to the places and causes they care about. "I love how GeekCause lets people bring those skills to the table in service to Nashville," Cyrus said. "I always wanted to find ways to give back that allowed me to maximize my impact through my unique skillset, so when I found out about GeekCause after moving to Nashville, I knew it was something for me."

A Year-Long Project with Lasting Value. Cyrus's GeekCause project with Tucker's House ran from June 2025 through June 2026. The work began with listening and learning: reviewing current workflows, identifying barriers and inefficiencies, and imagining what an improved process could look like for the organization.

That discovery process revealed a key need: a customer relationship management system that could help Tucker's House better manage its program work. The team selected Monday.com because it offered the features and integrations the organization needed, along with a limited number of free user licenses for nonprofits.

From there, Cyrus helped configure Monday.com for Tucker's House and connect it with other tools, including Jotform and Slack. After the team was trained on the new system, it went live in February. The final phase focused on optimization, reporting, and dashboards so the organization could make the most of its new setup.

Learning from the Mission. Beyond the technology work, Cyrus said the experience gave him a deeper understanding of Tucker's House and its mission to serve children living with disabilities through home modification projects. He also gained new appreciation for the partners and team members who invest significant time and energy into that work.

The project also offered Cyrus the chance to build hands-on experience with Monday.com CRM and compare it with other platforms he has used, including Salesforce.

Cyrus is the founder of a healthcare interoperability consulting company and has spent his career in healthcare technology. Before that, he once thought he might become a teacher. He has lived in Nashville for seven years and enjoys hiking, reading, cooking, and attempting to be handy around the house. Through GeekCause, Cyrus found a way to combine professional expertise with community service—helping a local nonprofit strengthen its operations while supporting work that matters to families across Middle Tennessee.

GeekCause is a Completely Different Way to Volunteer. Hands On powered by United Way of Greater Nashville pairs GeekCause volunteers to nonprofits in need. By sharing your tech expertise and a bit of your time, you can build capacity for local organizations working to meet the most pressing needs in our community. Most GeekCause projects are completed collaboratively and on a flexible schedule by individuals or small teams working remotely. [Learn more here.](#)

—Kris Wiese, Director Marketing and Communications
www.unitedwaygreaternashville.org



SECRETS FROM THE STUDIO

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Great Ingredients. Great Inspirations.

I was so excited to welcome Gigi Butler to the Bridges set to talk about her new show, In the Kitchen with Gigi, where great food, inspiring stories, and bold faith



come together around the table. There's something special about a kitchen in November. The aroma of a favorite recipe, the sound of family catching up, and a table filled with loved ones remind us that some of life's best memories happen at home.

For Gigi Butler, founder of Gigi's Cupcakes and host of In the Kitchen with Gigi, food is about much more than what's on the menu. It's an opportunity to bring people together, share stories, and discover how God is working in our lives.

Great Ingredients. Great Inspirations. The heart of In the Kitchen with Gigi is captured in a simple message: Every recipe has a story. Every guest has a journey. And every story has the potential to inspire.

Each week, Gigi welcomes guests into her kitchen to cook a meal, share their personal journeys,

and talk openly about the faith that has carried them through life's challenges and victories. Guests range from Christian artists Danny Gokey and Zach Williams to country music star Jo Dee Messina.

The show reflects a timeless example of hospitality. Throughout His ministry, Jesus gathered people, met their needs, and opened opportunities to share the hope of God. Gigi brings that same spirit to her kitchen, where food becomes a starting point for meaningful conversations. When people feel welcome, walls come down, stories emerge, and hearts open. The result is more than a cooking show—it's a celebration of faith, connection, and the experiences that shape us.

A Thanksgiving Secret: Keep It Simple. Thanksgiving can bring its share of kitchen chaos, but hosting doesn't have to be complicated. Prepare what you can ahead of time, invite others to help, and remember to enjoy the people gathered around you.

The Best Ingredient: Gratitude. This Thanksgiving, consider starting a new tradition. Invite everyone at the table to share one thing they're

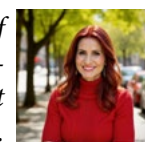
grateful for and one person who has made a difference in their life. You may discover stories you've never heard and reasons to be thankful you haven't considered.

Gigi Butler reminds us that meaningful moments don't require a perfect meal or an elaborate celebration. Sometimes, the greatest gift is simply making room for conversation, encouragement, and faith.

Today's Secret from the Studio: This season, gather your people, make something delicious, and remember that God is at work in the everyday moments of life.

Watch In the Kitchen with Gigi on CTN - Saturdays at 11AM CST. You can also watch on demand on the CTN APP.

—Monica Schmelter is the host of Bridges on CTN. She loves good conversation and reminding women that God isn't finished writing their story.
monicaschmelter.com



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From a Tackle Box of Fossils to 100,000 Square Feet of Wonder!

A Holiday Adventure for the Whole Family at the Wonders Center & Science Museum

At just seven years old, David Rives began collecting fossils he discovered in his own backyard in Tennessee. Fascinated by the wonders of God's creation, he carefully placed his treasures in a tackle box and proudly called his collection "David's Museum." Little did he know that his childhood curiosity and passion for scientific discovery would one day grow into something extraordinary.



Today, that little tackle box has become the inspiration behind the Wonders Center & Science Museum, a 100,000-square-foot destination in Dickson, Tennessee, one of the largest faith and family attractions in the world and the largest science museum in the state.

Founded by David Rives, the Wonders Center invites families to explore the incredible beauty, complexity, and design of God's creation through science, history, and hands-on discovery, all from a biblical worldview. Just 35 mi-



minutes west of downtown Nashville, it's a place where faith and science come together, inspiring visitors of all ages to discover the fingerprints of our Creator throughout the world around us.

Make Wonderful Memories This Holiday Season!

"With Thanksgiving, Christmas, and family gatherings just around the corner, we want to invite families to make the Wonders Center part of their holiday fun," says David Rives, founder of the Wonders Center & Science Museum. "Whether you're bringing your children, grandchildren, or friends and family visiting from out of town, there's something here for everyone to enjoy. Our hope is that families will make wonderful memories together while discovering the incredible beauty and design of God's creation."



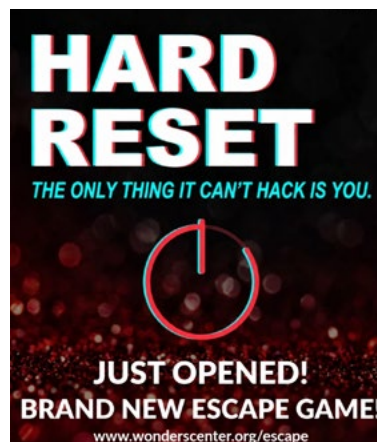
Explore three floors of fascinating exhibits featuring life-size animatronic dinosaurs, authentic fossils, meteorites, astronomy, biology, zoology, anatomy, history, literature, and more. Discover ancient artifacts, including authentic 1,000-year-old Bible scrolls, encounter live reptiles, and explore the spectacular Wonders of the Sea exhibit, featuring live aquariums and marine life. Kids can touch real dinosaur bones, dig for fossils, race cars while learning physics, enjoy hands-on STEM activities, and blast into space! Families can even try their hand at outdoor gem mining!

Don't miss the spectacular million-volt Tesla Coil musical lightning show or an incredible journey through the universe in the museum's Heavens Declare planetarium, ranked among the top ten planetariums in the world. Grab a coffee, snack, or sweet treat at the Java Man Café before continuing your adventure.



NEW! HARD RESET Escape Game — An Adventure to Experience Together!

Looking for something exciting to do with family or friends? The Wonders Center has just opened HARD RESET, an immersive escape game where



teamwork, problem-solving, and quick thinking come together for an unforgettable challenge!

It's a fantastic activity for families with older children, groups of friends, church groups, or a unique birthday party celebration. Work together, solve the challenges, and see if your team has what it takes to complete the mission! Book your game today at tickets.wonderscenter.org. Get 30% off when you book a party of eight online.

Mark Your Calendars for These Special Family Events!

November 5 — FREE UNWRAPPED Event Featuring the Film SIGHT and a presentation by Dr. Ming Wang

Enjoy a special showing of the inspiring Angel Studios film SIGHT, followed by an in-person presentation from world-renowned eye surgeon Dr. Ming Wang. Hear his remarkable journey from atheism to faith in Jesus Christ and how his scientific discoveries helped lead him to the Creator!



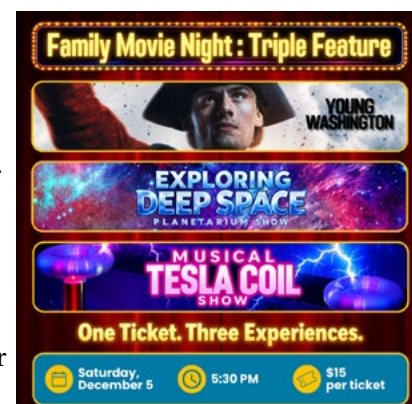
November 8 — FREE Cars & Coffee in Christ

Bring your classic or just come and enjoy an exciting gathering of classic cars, sports cars, motorcycles, and more! Car enthusiasts and families alike are invited to enjoy fellowship, beautiful vehicles, and a wonderful community atmosphere. Register your vehicle at: wonderscenter.org/car-show.

December 5 — Family Fun Night Triple Feature!

Gather the family for a special evening featuring the film YOUNG WASHINGTON, the museum's spectacular million-volt Tesla Coil lightning show, and an unforgettable planetarium experience. Three exciting experiences in one family night!

Discover the Wonder of God's Creation! This holiday season, give your family something fun to enjoy together! Plan your holiday visit today! Children ages 5 and under receive FREE museum admission!



Visit: wonderscenter.org

Visit: davidrivesministries.org



Our Hours
Monday-Friday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Saturday: Closed
Sunday: 1 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
We are now open until 8:00 p.m. on Thursdays.

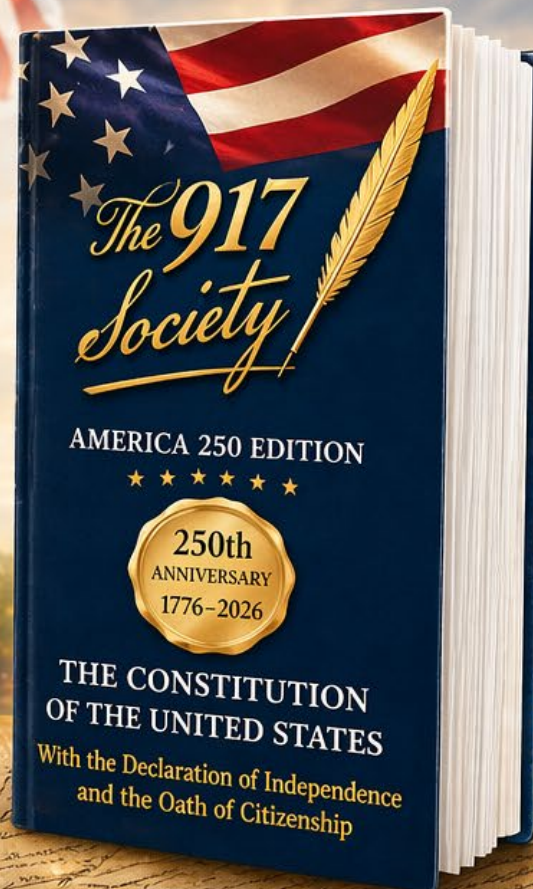


—Christine Johnson is a writer and Director of Public Relations at the Wonders Center & Science Museum, 855 Highway 46 South, Dickson, TN (931) 212-7990



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When Hope Finds You

— Stories of Lives Changed Through The Salvation Army —

Four stories of faith, restoration and lives transformed

Hope can be difficult to see in the middle of a crisis. A home is suddenly gone. Addiction has taken control. Someone leaves prison after more than a decade and has no idea how to begin again. A family arrives in a new city and spends their first nights sleeping in a car. In those moments, imagining a different future can feel almost impossible.

Every day at The Salvation Army Nashville Area Command, staff meet individuals and families in circumstances like these. Motivated by the love of God, they help address immediate needs while working with each person on what comes next. That may mean housing, childcare, transportation, recovery support or simply having someone listen long enough to understand the situation.

Kasey, Shauntelle, Simone and Alexandria came to The Salvation Army for different reasons and needed different kinds of help. Their stories show what can happen when practical support is paired with people willing to walk alongside someone through a difficult season.

Kasey: Returning to the Streets With Hope

After spending 11 years in prison, Kasey entered a world he no longer knew how to navigate. He was battling addiction and eventually experienced homelessness. Even ordinary responsibilities could feel overwhelming because he did not always know what resources existed or what options were available. Looking back, he describes that season with one word: hopeless. “I know I could do better,” he remembers, “I just didn’t know how.”



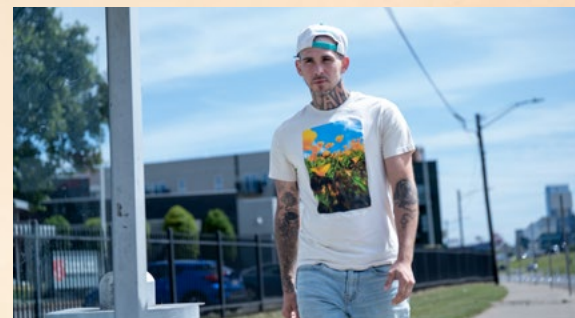
Kasey describes how The Salvation Army helped him rebuild his life.

When Kasey connected with The Salvation Army, staff helped him get into a room and find clothing, but his needs went beyond a place to stay. After more than a decade incarcerated, he needed help navigating the world outside prison. Staff assisted with transportation, medical and dental appointments, mental health care and other parts of reentry. “No matter what the problem was, they would work towards a solution with me,” he says.

Kasey also began strengthening his relationship with God. For him, the Christian foundation of The Salvation Army was an important part of his experience. “It’s a church and it’s built on Christian morals,” he says. “I believe that we have to get out here and love on people. We have to bring the word of Jesus to people.”

That conviction eventually led him back to the same streets where he had once experienced homelessness. Kasey started a street ministry in Nashville called “I Am,” where he provides food, shares his testimony, prays with people and talks about Jesus. Many on the street still recognize him. They knew him when he was struggling, which gives him a unique opportunity to tell them what God has done in his life.

Kasey says The Salvation Army showed him he could have a life outside of the streets, work on himself and strengthen his relationship with God. “If it wasn’t for The Salvation Army,” he says, “I’d be either homeless or dead.” Today, he returns to those same streets with something different to offer: hope.



Kasey on the streets, where he now shares hope and faith.

Shauntelle: When Everything Changes at Once

For Shauntelle and her children, life changed when a major tornado destroyed their home. Suddenly displaced, the family spent years moving between motels while bills accumulated. Shauntelle was still trying to recover from everything that had happened, and childcare was difficult to find. “There were a lot of things spinning in my head on what to do next, where to go, where to ask help,” she remembers.

Eventually, Shauntelle and her children entered an emergency shelter. A case-worker there asked whether she had heard about The Salvation Army. She had not, but hearing what help was available brought a sense of relief. “It was like fresh air,” she says. “Maybe that’s one step closer to what I need in life.”

When Shauntelle arrived at The Salvation Army’s Center of Hope, staff listened to what had happened to her family and helped her sort through the obstacles keeping them from stability. That included help with unpaid bills and childcare, along with workshops, resources and case management. “I’m thankful for The Salvation Army for actually listening to my circumstances,” she says, and for “giving me the opportunity to get back on my feet.”



Shauntelle with her three children.

Shauntelle kept moving forward. She completed training courses through Goodwill of Middle Tennessee, established herself as a cabinet specialist in the construction field and found a safe home for her children. Her experience is also a reminder that homelessness can follow a sudden crisis. The tornado changed the direction of her life, but with support and her own determination, Shauntelle was able to build stability again.

Simone: “I Thank God Every Day”

Simone knew something had to change. Addiction to crack cocaine and fentanyl had taken control of her life. She experienced homelessness, lived for a time in a broken-down trailer without water or electricity and turned to prostitution to get drugs. Eventually she reached a point where she thought, “I can’t live like this anymore. I can do better than this.”

Later, while in jail, Simone began praying and asked God to help her not return to the life she had been living. “I literally felt the hand of God reach down and just slowly take this addiction out of me,” she says. “I felt the desire leaving me to want to get high anymore.”

After leaving jail, Simone began treatment through a methadone clinic, but she still needed a stable environment where she could focus on recovery. She began contacting domestic violence shelters and eventually received a call that she had been accepted into a program at The Salvation Army. “I felt so welcomed, so accepted, so loved,” she remembers of her first day. “I felt like I just fit right in.”

Since then, Simone has remained sober, attends therapy weekly and has been able to address her mental health needs. She also points to the spiritual support she found there. “They have actual church services here, which is great for me because my faith plays a big part in my recovery,” she says.

That faith remains part of her daily life. “When I go out and whenever I get back to The Salvation Army and I go in my room, I get on my knees and I thank God for letting me have this place to come back to,” she says. “I thank God every day for The Salvation Army.”



Simone speaks about recovery and the role faith plays in her life.

Simone is also thinking about what she might do with her experience. She hopes to work with people experiencing addiction and women who have survived human trafficking. “I want to be a voice for the voiceless people that don’t have the strength to fight for themselves,” she says. “I believe that God works everything out in my life for a reason.”

Alexandria: A Place to Call Home

Alexandria, her fiancé and their three children moved from Georgia to Nashville with little time to plan. Her fiancé had found work here, but when the family arrived, they had nowhere to live. For a week or two, they slept in their car.

An online search eventually led them to The Salvation Army. Staff helped move the family from their car into a hotel for several weeks and provided assistance with gas and food while they worked toward something more permanent. Eventually, the family found a new home.

For Alexandria, the moment she remembers most is watching her children see it for the first time. “The look on my kids’ faces” was the best part, she says. After sleeping in a car and then a hotel, the children ran into the house to discover their own rooms. They finally had a safe place their family could call home.

The support did not stop when they moved. “They walked through with us,” Alexandria says. “We weren’t just thrown into it.” Staff connected the family with furniture and resources to put food in their refrigerator, continued checking on them and welcomed the children back for events.

Today, Alexandria and her fiancé have jobs, their children have a home, and the family has the stability they were searching for when they left Georgia. “We wouldn’t be here, still here today, without them,” Alexandria says. “They got us on our feet.” Then she sums up life now in just a few words: “We’re just happy.”



Alexandria and her family together outdoors.

When Hope Finds You

The needs that Kasey, Shauntelle, Simone and Alexandria brought to The Salvation Army were not the same, and neither was the help each person needed. For one, the next step included learning how to navigate life after prison. For another, it meant rebuilding after a tornado. Simone needed a stable place to continue recovery, while Alexandria’s family needed a path from sleeping in their car to having a home of their own. That individual approach reflects something central to The Salvation Army’s work: meeting human needs in Jesus’ name means seeing the person, not only the immediate crisis. Scripture repeatedly shows Jesus meeting people where they were, listening, responding to their needs and inviting them into something more. That example continues to shape how The Salvation Army serves today.

For Kasey, the result has included returning to the streets to share his faith with people who knew him when his own life looked very different. Shauntelle has built a career and a safe home for her children. Simone is sober and hopes her experience can one day help other women. Alexandria gets to watch her children grow up in a home they can call their own.

Their stories are different, but each includes people willing to meet them where they were and walk with them toward what came next. For The Salvation Army, that is what practical help offered in relationship can look like, grounded in the belief that today’s circumstances do not have to determine tomorrow.

—Misty Ratcliff, Development and Communications Relations
Manager, Kentucky and Tennessee Division,
The Salvation Army, www.salvationarmynashville.org





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The Role She Never Auditioned For

For nearly a decade, Jen Lilley has been a familiar face to television audiences, winning over fans with her warmth, charisma, and undeniable talent. Best known for her memorable roles on the *Hallmark Channel* and her time on *Days of Our Lives*, Lilley has built a career that reaches far beyond the romantic stories that first made her a household favorite. Stepping into one of the most meaningful roles of her career in the highly anticipated new biopic *JIMMY*, Lilley portrays the wife of legendary actor Jimmy Stewart, bringing to life the woman who stood beside one of Hollywood's most enduring icons. Set to release November 6, the film introduces audiences to another side of a star whose legacy has long extended beyond his films.

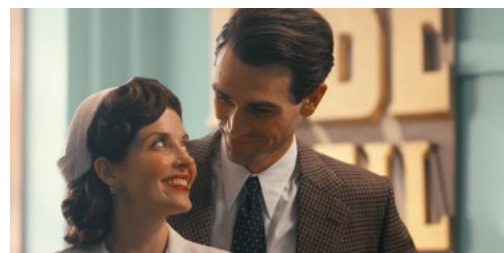


Jen Lilley, actress and foster-care advocate.

“I have always been a huge fan of Jimmy Stewart, his movies, and his life philosophy,” Lilley shares. “It is a dream come true to step into the role of the love of his life. Jimmy has held a special place in so many hearts, and now we get to see the entire life journey that built this beloved man. This film is beautiful and will be beloved by many.”



For Lilley, the role of Gloria Stewart is also an opportunity to explore the strength, devotion, and love behind the famed figure. While her latest acting role may place her in the spotlight, there's another role she holds even closer to her heart—and one she never had to audition for. Having experienced firsthand the challenges children and families face through her own journey of adoption, she has become a passionate advocate for America's children—especially those navigating the foster-care system. For her, the cause is more than a calling; it's deeply personal and has lit a flame within her to fight for change. These



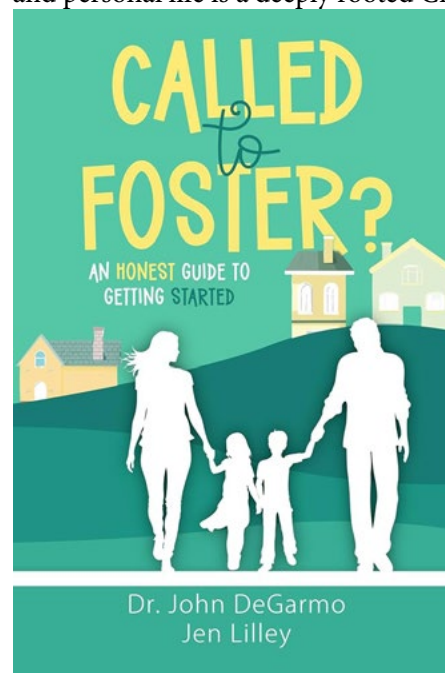
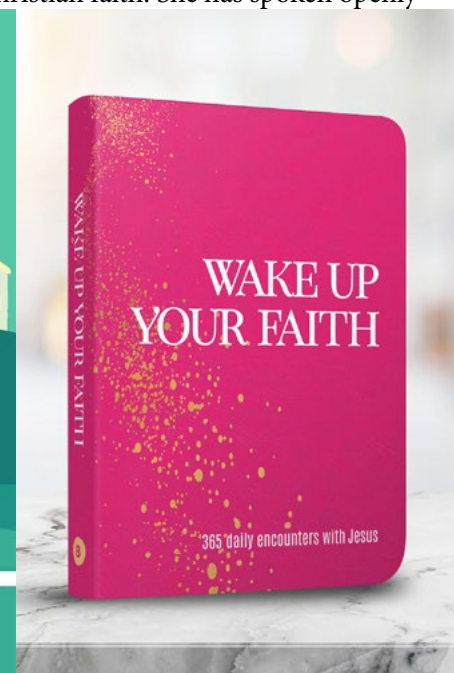
Actress Jen Lilley Takes On The Role of Jimmy Stewart's Wife In Upcoming JIMMY.

experiences have transformed her perspective and ultimately inspired her to make foster-care reform a personal mission. She is dedicated to helping others understand the realities these children face as well as what individuals can do to make a difference. Her message comes back to one simple truth: every child deserves safe, loving and stable adults in their lives, and there are countless

ways to help ensure they have them. This mission recently took another step forward with the release of *Called To Foster*, a book Lilley co-authored with foster-care expert Dr. John DeGarmo. The book is designed to encourage people who may have considered foster care but aren't sure whether they are ready to take the next step. She hopes it will help remove some of the uncer-

tainty surrounding foster care while inspiring more families and individuals to open their homes and hearts to children who desperately need stability.

At the heart of Lilley's advocacy and the way she approaches both her career and personal life is a deeply rooted Christian faith. She has spoken openly



about her relationship with Jesus and the role her faith plays in shaping her priorities—especially her desire to serve others and use her platform for something beyond herself. This ultimately inspired her to write *Wake Up Your Faith: 365 Daily Encounters with Jesus*, a yearlong devotional released in 2025. The devotional grew out of Lilley's sense that many people, including believers, can find themselves spiritually distracted or simply going through the motions. Rather than keeping those lessons to herself, she felt called to create something that could encourage people to intentionally make room for God each day. Built around Scripture, reflection and practical action steps, *Wake Up Your Faith* is designed to help readers reignite their faith and pursue a more vibrant, Christ-centered life. Lilley has described the project as an act of obedience to what she believed the Holy Spirit was prompting her to do—a message she hopes will encourage Christians to become more spiritually awake and more willing to live out their faith boldly.

“God doesn't want you to just be a person in the crowd hearing His sermon,” she shares. “He actually wants us to be a disciple. And you can't actually walk closely with Jesus if you're not willing to die to yourself daily and let Him take over.”

While acting has given her a platform to tell stories that reach millions, advocacy has given her a reason to use that platform for something larger than herself. With *JIMMY*, audiences will see Lilley take on a role that celebrates love, loyalty, and the life of an American icon. Through her advocacy, they see a woman determined to shine a light on children who need advocates of their own. While she may be stepping into the golden age of Hollywood for her latest role, her most meaningful work continues well beyond the screen.

For more information on Jen Lilley, visit her website www.jenlilley.com or follow her on social media @jen_lilley.

—Ashley Jenkins, award-winning actress, producer, philanthropist, singer, and author with a career spanning film, television, music, and media.

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Countdown to Christmas Cleaning: A Simple Homeowner's Guide

Molly Maid recommends spreading Christmas cleaning over several weeks rather than trying to do everything at once. Planning ahead helps homeowners prepare for guests, simplify holiday cooking, and enjoy more time with family.

Your Week-by-Week Cleaning Plan

Three Weeks Before Christmas: Declutter and Prepare

- Clear clutter from living areas and make room for decorations and gifts.
- Clean out and organize the pantry.
- Check cleaning supplies and replenish what you need.
- Prepare holiday dishes, tablecloths, and serving pieces.

Two Weeks Before Christmas: Deep Clean

- Clean the refrigerator and discard expired food.
- Deep-clean the oven, stovetop, and kitchen floors.
- Dust and vacuum living rooms, dining areas, and entryways.
- Prepare guest bedrooms with fresh sheets and towels.

One Week Before Christmas: Get Guest-Ready

- Give bathrooms a thorough cleaning and restock supplies.
- Finish preparing guest bedrooms with extra pillows and blankets.
- Clear kitchen counters and make space for holiday meals.
- Arrange furniture to accommodate family and visitors.

Christmas Eve: Final Touches

- Wipe countertops, sinks, and tables.
- Straighten pillows and blankets.
- Sweep entryways and empty trash bins.
- Check bathrooms and guest rooms one last time.

After Christmas: Reset for the New Year

Once the celebrations are over, take a little time to:

- Pack and label decorations for easier storage next year.
- Vacuum up pine needles, glitter, and other debris.
- Wash table linens and guest bedding.
- Clean kitchen surfaces and check leftover food.
- Donate unused gifts, outgrown clothing, and unwanted decorations.

The Three Most Useful Takeaways

1. Start early. Begin about three weeks before Christmas so cleaning doesn't become a last-minute burden.
2. Prioritize the rooms people use most. Kitchens, bathrooms, entryways, living rooms, and guest bedrooms deserve the most attention.
3. Save the final day for small jobs. A quick wipe-down, tidy-up, and trash removal can make your home feel ready without another major cleaning session.

The bottom line: A clean, welcoming home doesn't require doing everything in one day. By dividing tasks into manageable stages, homeowners can prepare for holiday guests while keeping more time available for the people and traditions that make Christmas special.

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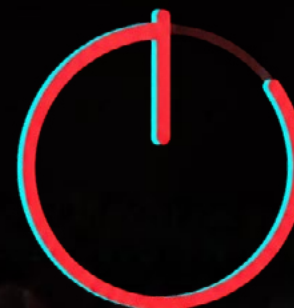
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The Eye Convinces Me There's A God

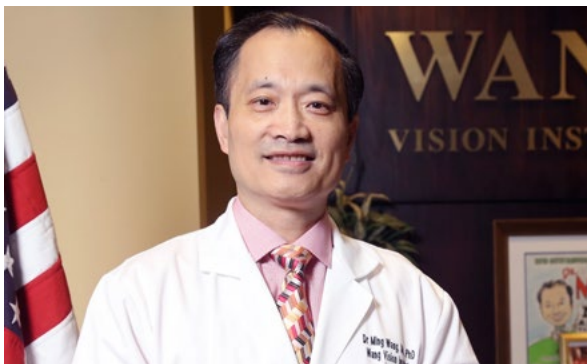
The film "Sight" (FREE link: sight.drmingwang.com) is based on the autobiography "From Darkness to Sight" by Dr. Ming Wang, Harvard & MIT (MD, magna cum laude) and one of the few laser eye surgeons in the world today who holds a PhD in laser physics. The film has won the Best Picture Award at ICVM International Christian Film Award.

Recently, at a Franklin Men's Group, Dr. Wang gave a presentation "The eye has convinced there is a God." He told the story how he, just like the student in the film "Sight" and "God's Not Dead" (inspired by his life story), came to America as a staunch atheist, and believed that science would save mankind. Fascinatingly, it was in the study of the science of the human eye, where he discovered the powerful clue for the existence of a creator! He talked about the complexity of the human eye, from visual signal capturing, processing to interpretation, and how the science has led Dr. Wang to God! And how life has taught him the Creator is Jesus Christ!

About Dr. Ming Wang, MD, PhD

Dr. Ming Wang, Harvard & MIT (MD, magna cum laude), is one of the few laser eye surgeons

in the world today who holds a doctorate degree in laser physics. He is a world-renowned laser eye surgeon, philanthropist, and a co-founder of the non-profit Common Ground Network.



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 procedures (including on over 4,000 doctors). The amniotic membrane contact lens, which Dr. Wang has invented (and holds two U.S. patents which he donated to the world), has been used by tens of

thousands of eye doctors throughout the world in nearly every nation, and millions have had their eyesight restored.

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) is based on Dr. Wang's autobiography "From Darkness to Sight" and co-stars Terry Chen and Greg Kinnear.



—Leona Walthorn

Got something to say?

rent our podcast studio

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AN ENCOURAGING WORD

The Chairman’s Perspective

Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious

A nonsensical word that brings a smile to our faces. It originated in 1931 with a student, Helen Herman, in a column in the Syracuse University student newspaper. Simply put, it was used to describe things that were grand and wonderful. Why, you say, am I bringing up such a word?



If you follow me at all, you will know that I am all about good communication and relationships. After all, God made us to communicate and have a great relationship with Him, and He wants that to go horizontal to the people around us as well.

Normally, I’m a glass-is-half-full guy; however, today I will say I see too many selfish, self-centered, and opinionated people full of themselves in our society and in our businesses.

I had the honor of meeting with the late two-time Academy president Robert Wise, who tallied four Academy Awards for *West Side Story* and *The Sound of Music*. The Academy also presented him with the prestigious Irving G. Thalberg Memorial Award, which is an honorary Oscar given for lifetime achievement in film. For a 29-year-old film studio executive, that was quite the moment of a lifetime. During our meeting, I asked, “What makes you such a great director?”

He smiled and admitted he used to be a hot-headed yeller early in his career. The turning point came during the filming of *The Sound of Music*. While preparing for a massive \$100,000 outdoor shoot, a lowly grip tried to speak with him, but Wise dismissed him. (a grip is someone who moves equipment around)

When they finally rolled the cameras, the entire shoot was ruined by shadows cast by a neighboring tree—an expensive disaster that couldn’t be fixed in post-production back then. As it turned out, the grip had been trying to warn Robert about that tree.

From that day forward, Wise dropped his diva mentality. He vowed to listen to anyone on his set, realizing that every crew member’s skills and purpose were essential to bringing his vision to life.

Communication is as much about listening as speaking, and speaking with kind words goes a long way to build relationships. We are commanded to love others as ourselves, and in business, this principle will increase the bottom line.

After that movie, Robert learned the true meaning of supercalifragilisticexpialidocious and became a man looking at a grand and wonderful purpose rather than profit. Are you profit-centric or purpose-centric, and what is the culture you are creating in your business?

—With over 46 years of entertainment industry experience, studio executive and producer Michael G. Carnes blends high-level business acumen with Christian integrity. He has managed multimillion-dollar budgets, consulted for Fortune 100 companies, and collaborated with Hollywood legends to build marketplace leadership. mcarnesproducer@gmail.com. He is Chairman of the Board of the Tennessee Christian Chamber of Commerce.

Check out my new book, *An Imperfect Servant*, at www.a.co/d/0hLgtJCn

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TEACHABLE MOMENTS

The Transformational Power of Consequential Impact

Have you ever shared what you believed was an important message, something meaningful, timely, even lifechanging, only to watch the listener remain completely unmoved?

As a speaker, I've given the same talk to different audiences and witnessed entirely different outcomes. One group is inspired. Another is indifferent. A third is transformed. How can the same message produce such different results? The answer is found in the Law of Consequential Impact, born from the Power of the Wisdom of Three: the right message, to the right audience, at the right moment in time.



This triad is not just a clever formula; it is a universal law of human transformation. It is the living reality behind the ancient adage, "When the student is ready, the teacher appears." A message, no matter how true or powerful, cannot produce impact unless all three elements are present. Leave one out, and the magic dissolves. Add something extra, and the purity of the triad collapses. Truths built of three brings Unified Perfection.

To understand this law more deeply, we must look at the origins of communication itself. Long before spelling meant writing, it meant speaking, stringing together sounds that became letters, forming words that carried meaning. In a world where few could read or write, wisdom still traveled through the spoken word. People learned, grew, and changed because someone spoke the right words at the right time to the right person. That is consequential impact.

A message of truth is not enough by itself. Truth must be received, and reception requires readiness. The audience must be prepared, open, searching, willing. And even readiness is not enough without the right moment. Timing is the invisible force that determines whether a message lands softly, bounces off, or pierces the heart with clarity.

Think of your own life. How many times have you heard advice that meant nothing to you, until one day, in a moment of need, the same words suddenly carried power? The message didn't change. You did. Your readiness aligned with the moment, and the message became transformational.

This is why two people can hear the same truth and walk away with completely different outcomes. One will be changed forever. The other is untouched. Impact is not determined by the speaker's passion or the message's quality alone. It is determined by the alignment of all three elements working together.

When the right message meets the right audience at the right moment, transformation becomes inevitable. Hearts open. Minds shift. Lives change. This is the miracle of consequential impact, simple, elegant, and profoundly powerful.

As communicators, mentors, leaders, and Solutionaries, our role is not to force change but to deliver truth faithfully and trust the triad to do its work. When alignment happens, impact follows. And when impact follows, transformation begins. Magic happens when all three align. And that magic is what changes a person's life.

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, *Solutionary*, 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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Better a Little: Why Chasing the Presidential Cycle Misses the Point

In recent weeks, several clients have called with the same question: “I’ve heard the third year of a presidency is the best time to be in the stock market. Should we abandon our plan and go fully aggressive in 2027?” My answer usually starts with a question of my own: Has your investment goal changed?



Proverbs 16:8 offers a timeless guide: “*Better a little with righteousness than much gain with injustice.*” Solomon cautions us against get-rich-quick thinking that pulls us away from the values we’ve already established.

The data behind the question is real. Since 1950, the S&P 500 has averaged a 17.2% return in the third year of a presidential term, the strongest year in the four-year cycle, according to an Open Bell Daily article published October 17, 2026. But averages hide wide swings, and history doesn’t promise the future. Upending a sound strategy to chase one year’s pattern introduces significant timing risk.

Proverbs 30:15–16 captures the pull of that temptation: “*There are three things that are never satisfied, four that never say, ‘Enough!’: the grave, the barren womb, land, which is never satisfied with*

water, and fire, which never says, ‘Enough!’” Picture parched ground that drinks the rain and immediately thirsts for more. Chasing returns works the same way. There is always another headline promising the next great year.

When we invest what God has entrusted to us, every dollar should have a purpose and a strategy. A diversified, long-term portfolio of companies you’re proud to own will serve you better than a bet on a historical pattern. Instead of chasing third-year returns, consider these steps:

- Rebalance, don’t restructure. If a rally pushes your stock allocation beyond your target, trim winners and rebalance into fixed income. That is the opposite of chasing.
- Watch the economy, not the calendar. Inflation, interest rates, corporate earnings, and global events outweigh any cycle trend. Expect volatility as campaigns heat up, and let your plan set your course.
- Measure against your plan, not the index. Your portfolio isn’t built to mirror the market. When headlines report gains or losses, your results may differ, better or worse, based on your diversification.
- Make your giving strategic. If markets rise, consider taking your required minimum

distribution while prices are elevated. If you’re 70½ or older and not yet giving through qualified charitable distributions (QCDs) from your IRA, this may be the year to start.

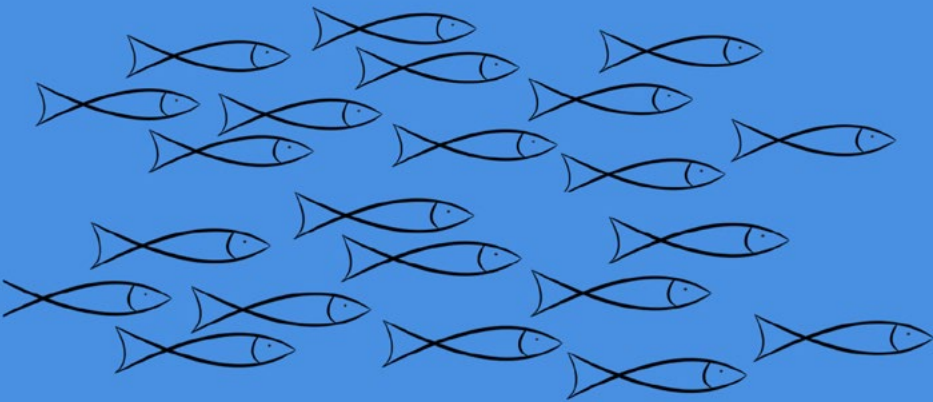
Parched ground is never satisfied, and neither is a portfolio chasing every headline. Faithful stewardship isn’t about catching the best year. It’s about following a plan built for your purpose. Before the 2027 headlines start, take an hour to review your allocation, your giving strategy, and whether you own companies that reflect your convictions. With more than 20 years of experience guiding faith-driven families, our team can help you build that plan and stay the course. Call 855.378.1806 to schedule your review.

Michael Wallin - With more than three decades in financial services, Michael Wallin and the team at Optivise Advisory Services help families align their finances with their faith. For guidance on debt management or building a plan, call 855.378.1806.



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“Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.” (Hebrews 10: 24-25 NLT)

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BODY & SOUL

You Are Where You Are, That Christ May Be There

Many years ago, as I was about to begin high school a very good friend of my mother stop by for a visit. Ms. Anna was a very special person to us as she was able to do just about anything, although she had paralysis throughout her left arm and shoulder due to polio as a child. She could draw and paint just about anything and would use her left arm as a stable spot that could hold anything as she meticulously sketched something or even cross-stitching. I was honored to have seen a few of her beautiful creations she had made over the years.



As we were talking, I shared with Ms. Anna a quote that was on the wall in the high school I had worked at refinishing floors over the summer. As Ms. Anna and I spoke for quite a while, including the medium of painting or cross-stitching, she paused and then summed up her thoughts saying I really liked it very much..."it was sort of growing on me. I really like this...let me work on it a little".

I had just about forgotten about her visit until one day my mother reminded me that Ms. Anna and her husband stopping by after school. I hurried home from school as Ms. Anna also was excited to show me her cross-stitching creation which fit perfectly in her husband's antique frame. It was truly beautiful, I'm not sure if it was the beauty of her creation that I appreciated the most or the magnificent, determined ability of Ms. Anna while managing her painful paralysis as she created this most beautiful etching ... the prettiest I have ever seen!

BODY & SOUL

You Have Found Someone

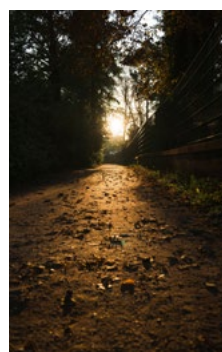


"For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him." (2 Chronicles 16:9).

The eyes of God are searching throughout the entire earth, looking for hearts that are fully His... hearts that will trust Him, and take Him at His Word. What a powerful thought! I remember this verse jumping out at me when I was a freshman in college. I wanted my heart to

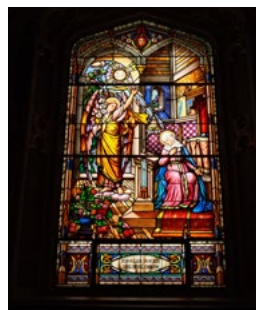


be a heart that would leap out to God. I wanted to be one that when God's eyes saw me, He would see a heart loyal to Him. The thought occurred to me



that He is always searching for those that would take Him at His Word, and how many people must He pass by because they are perhaps doubters needing more "proof" or visible evidence before believing? We ask God to show us the whole picture when He may be asking us to trust Him with just the next step.

Think about Mary receiving a message that would change her life forever. She would conceive and bring forth Jesus, the Son of God. Mary was young and did not have the entire picture, yet her response was, "God! You have found someone who will take you at your Word". *"Be it unto me according to thy word."* (Luke 1:38b) In other words, "Lord, if this is what You have said, then I believe You!"



God is still looking for people whose hearts are fully His today! The Bible is full of His Words and He is asking us to simply believe.

Taking God at His Word does not mean that we will never have questions, experience fear, or walk through difficulties. The circumstances should not silence our faith. What might God accomplish through us if we stop making excuses and simply trusting Him?

Pray this, "Lord, You have found someone who will take You at Your Word. That someone is me!" May your heart be a heart that will leap out when God sees it!



I have also included a QR code linking to a song by Cody Carnes, Benjamin Williams Hastings @CodyCarnes that will continue to encourage you as you take God at His Word!



—Rhonda L. Smart.
rhondalsmart@gmail.com



RESET
YOUR SUMMER



88.7

Before The First Phone Arrives



Every Christian parent I know is bracing for the same day. The day the phone arrives. We talk about it the way coastal towns talk about hurricane season. We read the articles, compare the rules other families set, debate the right age as if it's a doctrinal question. Twelve? Fourteen? High school? And while we watch that horizon, something quietly slips past us: the years we are standing in right now.

Here is the truth I wish someone had said to me sooner. The years before the first phone are the cheapest years of spiritual formation a family will ever get, and most of us spend them worrying instead of building.

Think about what you have while a child is 6, 8, 10 years old. You have their evenings. You have their car rides. You have a child who still thinks reading together is a treat and who will answer a question at the dinner table without checking anything in their pocket first.

You have, in other words, everything Deuteronomy 6 assumes: the sitting at home, the walking along the road, the lying down, and the rising up, all of it still yours. No app is competing for it yet. No group chat is buzzing under the table.

That window closes. Not because the phone is evil, but because the phone ends the era when

your family's attention was undivided by default. After it arrives, every habit must fight for its life. Before it arrives, habits can simply be planted. So plant them. Three are worth more than all the rest.

First, plant the habit of Scripture as story. A child who has walked through Genesis and Exodus and the Gospels as stories they love, before age 11, carries something a teenager cannot easily lose. Read them, watch them, tell them badly from memory on a long drive. The goal is not mastery. The goal is that the people of these stories become people your child knows, so that later, when life gets complicated, Joseph and David and Peter are already friends.

Second, plant the habit of the one question. After the story, at the table, in the car: one open question, and everyone answers, parents included. What would you have done when the storm started? Why do you think Joseph cried? Ten minutes, most nights. It is small enough to survive a school night, and what survives school nights is what forms a family. A child who has answered a thousand small questions about God at your table will not find it strange, at 15, to bring you a big one.



Third, plant taste. This is the overlooked one. The best protection a child can carry into the phone years is not a filter; it is a formed sense of what is worth their attention.

Children learn this the way they learn everything, by exposure. A child who has been steadily fed stories that end, that mean something, that lead somewhere, develops an instinct for the difference between food and candy. That instinct goes with them into the app store. Your rules will not. None of this requires a program or a curriculum or a perfect family. I know because our family is not one. It requires only the decision to treat these years as what they are: not the calm before the storm, but the planting season before it.



Then, when the phone day comes, you will still set the rules and the limits, and you should. But you will not be handing a phone to a child who is spiritually empty-handed. You will be handing it to a child with a decade of stories in them, a habit of talking to you about God, and a working sense of what deserves their attention. That child is not safe from everything. No child is. But that child is ready in the only way that lasts. The phone is coming. Stop bracing and start planting.

—Christian Alexander - In addition to being the founder of Faithful Kids (faithfulkids.app) — a Bible video app for kids ages 7 to 15, he writes about faith formation and screens in family life.

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Spiritual Goal for November

Surrender to God's Timing

"The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him."

Lamentations 3:25

Message

Every warrior of God eventually comes face-to-face with one of the hardest disciplines in the Kingdom: surrendering to God's timing. Not understanding it. Not predicting it. Not trying to force it. Surrendering to it... 100%

Waiting isn't passive. Waiting is warfare.

When you wait on God, you are declaring with your life: "Lord, I trust You more than I trust my own plans, my calendar, my pressure, and my deadlines." And Heaven takes that seriously.

Sometimes God delays things not to deny us... but to develop us. He strengthens your faith muscles in the waiting. He sharpens your character in the delay. He protects you from things you don't see. He rearranges circumstances you don't even know He's working on.

And while you're pacing the floor wondering "When, God?" Heaven is working behind the scenes whispering, "Watch what I'm preparing."

Surrendering to God's timing is not giving up... it's giving Him full control. It's choosing peace over panic. Trust over striving. Rest over wrestling.

God has not forgotten a single promise He's made to you. Not one. His timing is not late... His timing is perfect. And when the moment comes, it will happen so quickly, so clearly, so beautifully, you'll say, "Lord... this was worth the wait."

Prayer For Today

Heavenly Father, I release my timeline into Your hands. I surrender my need to control the outcome or the schedule. Teach me to wait with trust, patience, and confidence in Your goodness. Strengthen my heart in the waiting and align my spirit with Your perfect will. I choose Your timing over mine. In Jesus' name. Amen.

—Mark W. Koch

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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NUTCRACKER! Magical Christmas Ballet

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