

SMALL GROUPS | A DROP FROM THE ALTAR | FAMILY ANSWER MAN | EVENTS

the messenger

LIVE OAK CHURCH MA JANUARY 2025

**FROM
THE
PASTOR'S
DESK**

**P A R E N T I N G
A S
P R I O R I T Y**

**A NEW
UNDERSTANDING
OF WORSHIP**

**THE
BIBLE
RECAP**

**EMPOWERING
YOUNG ADULTS
FOR KINGDOM WORK**

**THE HEART
BEHIND OUR
KIDS' MINISTRY**

**MAKING LIFE
DISCIPLES**



LIVE OAK

young adults

first sundays

*Launching February 2
6 pm in the Chapel
The First Sunday of Every Month*

<https://www.liveoak.church/young-adults>

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

a time and a place for everyone

For more information about groups and events visit www.liveoak.church or call (225) 664-4801.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

SUNDAY

8:00 AM Worship Service

- 8:45 AM Children & Pre-Teen Sunday School
Sherri Gardner: 1st-4th Grade - Room #214
Jodi Rushing: 5th-6th - Room #213
- 8:45 AM Students 7th-12th Grade:
Nathan Lott - Upstairs in FLC
- 8:45 AM Adult Small Groups:
See Page 5 for Full List

- 9:30 AM Children's Ministry - 1st-4th Grade - FLC
- 9:30 AM Preteen - Chapel

9:30 AM Worship Service

- 10:00 AM Students 7th-12th Grade:
Jonny Carroll - Upstairs in FLC

- 11:00 AM Children's Ministry - 1st-4th Grade - FLC
- 11:00 AM Preteen - 5th-6th Grade - Chapel

11:00 AM Worship Service

WEDNESDAY

- 8:00 AM Quilters Ministry - FLC
- 9:30 AM Worship Wednesday - Online

- 6:00 - 7:15 PM Kingdom Kidz: 1st-4th Grade
- 6:00 - 7:30 PM Preteen: 5th-6th Grade
- 6:00 - 7:30 PM Student Ministry: 7th-12th Grade
- 6:30 - 7:20 Preschool (pre-k3 to kindergarten)

6:30 - 7:20 PM Worship & Study - Adults

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Men's Ministry at Top Golf - Jan. 4 at 10 am
- Nursing Home Sing (Monthly) - Jan. 26th at 2 pm
- Mother Son Amazing Race - Jan. 19 at 5 pm
- Annual State of the Church Meeting - Jan. 26 at 6 pm
- New Member Recognition - Jan. 26
- Young Adult Worship Service - Feb. 2 at 6 pm
- Mother Daughter Retreat - Feb. 21-22
- Graduate Dinner - Mar. 16 at 6 pm
- Graduate Recognition - Apr. 27 at 9:30 am & 11 am

download the app



church
map



ADULT BIBLE STUDIES

blue = small group | green = large group

Sunday 8:45 AM

Young Adult Class // *The Apostle's Creed* // Krist & Katie Norsworthy - Room #201

Young & Median Adult Class // *Book of Colossians* // David Orges - FLC Upstairs

Median Adult Class // *Book of Revelation* // Dickie Davis - Room #202

Senior Adult Class // *Focusing on Worship* // Layne Hutchinson - Room #212

Pastor's Class // *Gospel of Luke* // Dr. Mark Crosby - Choir Room

New Member Class // Bro. Sam LoBello - Room #102



Sunday 9:30 AM

Co-ed Class // *Gospel of Luke* // Robert Poole - Room #211

Couple's Class // *Gospel of John* // Todd & Sealy Pettavino - Room #202



Sunday Evenings

4:00 PM // **Doctrinal Study** // Layne Hutchinson & Jon Williams - Room #202

6:00 PM // **Young Adult Group** // Nathan Lott & Krist Norsworthy - FLC



Monday

6:00 PM // **Men's Discipleship Group** // *Topical* // Robert Poole's Home

6:30 PM // **Deeper Life Men** // *Explore the Bible* // David Tate - Room #201

6:30 PM // **Deeper Life Women** // *Heaven: When Faith Becomes Sight. (January 13th)* // Jan Tate - Chapel



Tuesday

6:30 PM // **Discovering Daniel** (1st & 3rd Tuesday) // Stephen Hebert - Chapel

6:30 PM // **Grief Support Group** (2nd & 4th Tuesday) // Stephen Hebert - Chapel

Wednesday 6:30 PM

Co-ed Home Group // *The Book of Acts* // Jim & Janet Setoudeh's Home

Worship & Study // Pastor Mark - Sanctuary

Thursday

6:00 PM // **Men's Play & Pray Basketball** // Jim Otken - FLC

7:00 PM // **REFUGE Addiction Recovery** // Sam LoBello - Room #201

7:00 PM (1st & 3rd Thursdays) // **Lifeline: Parents of Addicted Youth & Adults** // Summer Babin - Counseling Hall

Friday

5:30 AM // **Men's Group** // *Book of Acts* // Jim Otken - Room #202

6:00 PM // **Co-ed** // *The Book of Acts* // Robert Poole - Room #202

Second Saturday of Each Month

7:30 AM // **Men's Prayer Breakfast & Study** // *This is the Day* // Sam LoBello - Room #202



REFUGEE

Thursdays at 7 PM

**STRUGGLING WITH ADDICTION?
WE ARE HERE FOR YOU.
WE MEET IN ROOM #201.
COME JOIN US!**

**“Taste and see the LORD is good; blessed is
the one who takes refuge in Him.”**

Psalm 34:8

Support. Instruction. Accountability.



LIVE OAK CHURCH

**QUILTING
MINISTRY**

WEDNESDAYS AT 8 AM IN THE FAMILY LIFE CENTER
COME JOIN US!

YOU CAN SUPPORT THIS MINISTRY BY WRITING QUILTERS IN THE “OTHER SECTION” OF YOUR OFFERING ENVELOPE. WE GREATLY APPRECIATE YOU SUPPORTING US AS WE REPLENISH OUR INVENTORY AFTER SENDING 220 QUILTS TO NORTH CAROLINA WITH OUR DISASTER RELIEF!



from the PASTOR'S DESK



As I write this article, the year is almost over, and here at Live Oak Church, it has been a wonderful year!

We saw many baptisms of couples, parents and children, youth and adults.

What a blessing to see so many professing Jesus as their Savior and Lord.

We saw amazing fruit through our many ministries and retreats.

We had a great time with Frank Turek being here and the blessing we saw in the hearts of many.

We also saw our Wednesday night services (adult, youth, and children) grow and expand.

Our counseling ministry continues to grow and help others of all circumstances and situations.

Overall, we were blessed with success by God's grace and goodness.

Success is something we all hope for and strive for. In other words, no one wants to fail or lose in life. So, how does one find the success they desire? How does one overcome,

find victory, and succeed? For some, they feel they will never succeed, be victorious, or find peace.

In this New Year, most of us desire to be successful in our marriages, families, and business.

But many ask, "How does that happen?" How is one "blessed for success?" In the month of January, we will be studying what the Bible says about success and how one becomes successful in a world where there is failure, challenges, and problems.

Join us this New Year for the series "Blessed for Success" as we study what the Word of God says about God's people finding hope and success in life now and forever.

Happy New Year!

Dr. Mark Crosby
Senior Pastor

*HOW DOES
ONE FIND THE
SUCCESS THEY
DESIRE?*



A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF WORSHIP IN THE NEW YEAR

by Trent Barnett

As we start a new year, we often focus on specific areas - losing weight, getting out of debt, or finally starting that dream project. The shift in mindset is a perfect opportunity to reassess our spiritual lives as well. When we look at our worship, how can we draw closer to the heart of God this year? The way we understand worship itself can help shape what next steps we take.

In the Old Testament, the Levites were commissioned by God as a tribe of priests, judges, gatekeepers, craftsmen, singers, and musicians. These weren't entertainers; they were ministers who led people to honor God through sacrificial worship. The focus was never to be on the tools - the songs, music, instruments, or leaders. Over time, leaders shifted away from a pastoral role in worship toward a more music-centric, performance-based model. This lasted for hundreds of years, and is unfortunately still present in some churches today. With the Reformation, the Church shifted back toward biblical worship leadership, as songs returned to the language of the people, and were now set to familiar melodies. This allowed the people of God to participate and sing along once again as God had always desired. This was a return to the heart of worship - the exaltation of Jesus Christ. Worship was never to be focused on music or melodies; worship is about Jesus.

One worship leader (Michael Boggs) says, "Church, we do not sing because we need a 'warm-up' before the sermon. We don't sing so people have time to get to their seats. We do not sing because we need to be entertained. We sing because God is good. We sing because God is worthy. We sing because it's a communal act of unity in which we declare the glory of God, the gravity of sin, and the grandeur of grace!"

When we understand worship this way, we see it as more than just music and singing. Sure, singing is an important piece, and something Scripture commands us to do regularly. Worship though, is defined as ascribing worth to someone or something of significant value. For the Christian, our highest worth is God. Christian worship is a longing to know God, to interact with Him, and to make His will first in our lives.

It's a desire for relationship. Just as our connection with a spouse grows the closer we are in relationship with one another, when we walk closer in relationship with God, the deeper our worship of Him grows.

"Worship, as it is described so vividly in Scripture, was meant to be a dialogue, flowing from the outpouring of a relationship with God... It is a two-way communication between God and His people. We exalt God. He reveals His presence and changes our hearts. We pour out our hearts and remember His greatness... He meets our needs for intimacy and grace" (Joe Horness). When we see worship as a rich expression of a growing relationship with our Savior, we place the highest value on it. Our identity and the center of our focus in life should be rooted in our relationship with Christ. Everything else falls into place from there. With God first, His will for our lives takes center stage, as all other distractions begin to fade away.

When we see God as the only one worthy of our worship, we desire to surrender our entire lives to Him as an act of worship. This is what Paul means in Romans 12:1 when he says, "Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. This is your spiritual worship." The prophet Amos makes it clear that we can worship in a way that is inauthentic, declaring this actually burdens God's heart (Amos 5:21-23).

As we reassess our understanding of worship, let's consider the following questions: Are we coming to church to join a community of believers in singing, fellowship, learning, and serving (Col. 3:16; 1 Pt. 4:10)? Are we worshipping God during the week, outside of church services (Ps. 35:18)? Do people see the "joy of our salvation" (Ps. 51:12) in the way we live and prioritize our schedules? Lord, help us see your heart in worship. May we move beyond defining worship as an 18 minute block of music once a week. Let's begin this new year daily worshipping in pursuit of the living God! 🌿

THE BIBLE RECAP STUDENT MINISTRY

by Dawn Lott

Starting January 5th, the 8:45 Sunday school class will embark on an exciting journey through the entire Bible! Designed for Jr. High and High School students, this class will use *The Bible Recap* by Tara-Leigh Cobble as our guide. Together, we'll explore how the Bible tells one overarching story—the story of God's love and redemption through Jesus Christ.

Each week, we'll dive into Scripture to uncover the meaning behind each book of the Bible, connecting its message to God's bigger plan. This study will help students see how every part of the Bible points to Jesus, equipping them with a deeper understanding of God's Word. Whether it's Genesis, Psalms, or Revelation, we'll unpack the themes, characters, and truths that shape our faith.

Our time together will include reading the Bible, engaging in group discussions, and learning how to apply its timeless wisdom to our daily lives. This isn't just about gaining knowledge—it's about growing in faith, love, and devotion to God. Through this class, students will develop a clearer view of God's character, His plan for humanity, and His purpose for their lives.

The Bible Recap provides an accessible and engaging way to approach Scripture, making it a perfect fit for students who want to build their understanding and confidence in reading the Bible. It's a great opportunity to connect with others, ask questions, and strengthen your relationship with Christ.

Join us starting January 5th as we take this life-changing journey through God's Word. Let's grow together in faith and see how every chapter and verse reveals the beauty of Jesus and His gospel. Don't miss it! 🌿

FOLLOW ALONG!





Parenting as Priority

Raising the Next Generation of Christ-Followers

by David Orges

Parenting is a calling unlike any other. When God places a child in your arms, He entrusts you with more than just feeding, clothing, and educating them. He entrusts you with their souls. This isn't just a sentimental thought to put on a picture frame; it's a weighty reality. It's more than a job or a responsibility, it is your calling. As parents, we are called to raise the next generation of Christ-followers.

But the question is, how do we do that? How do we teach our children to love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength in a culture that offers distractions and temptations at every turn? How do we prioritize their spiritual development when life feels like a never-ending list of practices, homework, and family obligations?

The Vision: Parenting with the End in Mind

It may sound cliché, but you have to begin with the end in mind. Skip Bertman used to say that the success of his championship teams began with visualization. He would literally have his teams sit together at the beginning of each season, close their eyes, and visualize themselves winning the College World Series. Why? Because no matter how hokey it might have felt, he knew the power of his players seeing themselves achieving their goals before they ever began pursuing them.

What does this have to do with you? Have you visualized the successful outcome of your parenting? Imagine your child at age 25. What do you hope to see? You might picture them confidently navigating adulthood, forming healthy relationships, and pursuing meaningful work. But more than anything else, don't you hope to see a young adult who is growing in their relationship with Jesus and seeks to follow Him?

If that's the ultimate goal, then every decision we make as parents should be filtered through one question: *Does this help my child grow as a disciple of Christ?*

When we parent with the end in mind, everything changes. Soccer practice isn't just about athletic skills—it becomes an opportunity to model integrity, teamwork, and perseverance. You don't avoid athletics, you leverage them for spiritual development. Family dinners aren't just about eating—they're about creating a space for meaningful conversation and prayer. Mealtimes can help kids learn mindfulness. Even discipline isn't just about correcting behavior—it's about shaping their hearts.

The goal isn't to raise perfect kids (spoiler alert: they don't exist). The goal is to raise kids who know the One who is perfect.

Prioritizing Spiritual Growth

If we're honest, it's easy to let spiritual priorities slip. Church attendance can become sporadic. Bible reading becomes an afterthought. Prayers are reduced to hurried bedtime rituals.

But here's the hard truth: if we don't make our child's spiritual growth a priority, the world will fill the gap. The average child spends over seven hours a day consuming media, compared to less than 30 minutes on spiritual development. If we don't teach our children who God is, the culture will teach them who He isn't.

So, how do we make spiritual growth a priority?

1. Start at Home

Discipleship begins in the living room, not the sanctuary. And the good news is you don't need a seminary degree to lead your child spiritually. Start simple: read a Bible story together, pray over their day, or memorize Scripture as a family.

One practice you can start today is sharing "God Sightings" at the dinner table. Ask your kids where they saw God at work that day. Maybe it was in the kindness of a friend, the beauty of a sunset, or an answered prayer. Over time, this builds their awareness of God's presence in everyday life. The more they look for God at work in their lives, the more they will find Him working.

2. Model What You Teach

Kids are experts at spotting hypocrisy. They'll know if you're preaching one thing and living another. That doesn't mean you need to be a perfect parent (thank goodness), but it does mean striving for authenticity.

Let your children see you reading your Bible, hear you praying, and watch you serve others. When you mess up (and you will), own it. Apologize and model the grace and forgiveness you hope they'll extend to others.

3. Plug into a Church Community

Parenting isn't meant to be a solo journey. Surround yourself and your kids with a community of believers who can support, encourage, and challenge you. Make church a non-negotiable part of your week, and don't just attend—engage. Get involved in a small group, attend a Sunday school, serve in a ministry, and encourage your kids to do the same.

4. Reclaim Your Calendar

If you're too busy for family devotions, prayer, or church, you're too busy. Period. Your calendar is a theological document—it reveals what you value most.

Take a hard look at your family's schedule. Are you overscheduling your kids to the point where their spiritual lives are getting squeezed out? This can be a painful practice but it is powerful. Prioritize what matters most, even if it means saying no to some good things to make room for the best things.

Education: Practical Tools for Intentional Parenting

Parents often ask, Where do I even start? Here are three practical tools to help you intentionally disciple your kids:

1. Family Worship Time

Set aside 15–20 minutes a week for family worship. It doesn't need to be complicated. Sing a worship song, read a Bible passage, and pray together. Keep it simple and consistent. If you need an intermediate step before you get to that point, start during your drive times.

2. Faith Milestones

Celebrate spiritual milestones in your child's life, like their first Bible, profession of faith, baptism, or a mission trip. These moments reinforce the importance of their faith journey and give them markers to look back on. Make meaningful moments into spiritual monuments!

3. Scripture Everywhere

Surround your kids with Scripture. Post Bible verses on the fridge, write them on sticky notes in their lunchboxes, or play worship music in the car. These small steps plant seeds of truth in their hearts.

What Will You Do Today?

This is the part where we move from theory to action. Take a moment to reflect on your parenting priorities. Where are you thriving? Where do you need to grow?

Here's a challenge for you: Choose one spiritual practice to implement this week. Maybe it's reading a Bible story at bedtime or praying with your kids before school. Maybe it's turning off the TV for 15 minutes to have a family devotion. Whatever it is, start small and be consistent.


As you take these steps, remember this: You are not alone. God equips those He calls, and the fact that you are a parent means you are called. He will give you the wisdom, patience, and strength you need to parent well.

The Legacy You're Building

At the end of the day, your greatest legacy won't be your career, the size of your house, or your social media following. Your legacy will be the children you raise.

Imagine standing before the Lord one day, surrounded by your children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, knowing you did everything you could to point them to Jesus. That's a legacy worth pursuing.

Parenting is hard work, but it's holy work. And the good news is that we serve a God who delights in doing immeasurably more than we could ask or imagine. So, take a deep breath, lean into His grace, and keep going.

The next generation of Christ-followers is depending on you. 

Mother-Daughter

• RETREAT •

FEBRUARY
21-22

START TIME: 6:00PM

— For: —

MOTHERS & GIRLS IN GRADES
KINDERGARTEN AND UP

— Activities: —

DEVOTIONS, CRAFTS, GAMES, FOOD, AND FUN!

Cost:

\$20 PER PERSON

— Place: —

LION KING RETREAT CENTER



LAUNCHES JANUARY 26

New Sunday Morning Bible Study

the Apostles' Creed

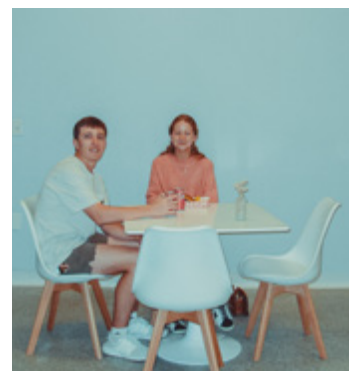
together we believe



Young Adults and Young Couples

8:45 AM IN ROOM 201

EMPOWERING YOUNG ADULTS FOR KINGDOM WORK AT LIVE OAK



by Krist Norsworthy

In a world filled with distractions and competing priorities, the role of young adults in the church has never been more crucial. At Live Oak Church, we believe that young adult ministry is a vital arm of the church, equipping the next generation to grow in faith, serve the community, and carry out Kingdom work.

The Apostle Paul charges Timothy: “Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12, ESV). Young adults are not the church of tomorrow; they are an active and indispensable part of the church today. They bring energy, fresh perspectives, and a heart ready to engage the world with the Gospel.

At Live Oak Church, our young adult ministry seeks to create an environment where individuals can connect, grow, and thrive. Connection is essential in this life stage, as many young adults navigate significant transitions—college, careers, relationships, and more. By fostering authentic community, we fulfill the biblical call to “bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2, ESV).

Growth is equally vital. Through discipleship groups, biblical teaching, and mentorship, we want to help young adults deepen their relationship with Christ. As Paul writes in Colossians, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom” (Colossians 3:16, ESV). A robust young adult ministry grounds participants in Scripture, equipping them to stand firm in their faith amid societal pressures.

Finally, young adults are called to action. At Live Oak Church, we encourage them to step boldly into service—whether that’s leading worship, teaching children, or engaging in missions. Jesus’ words in Matthew 28:19-20 remind us of this Great Commission: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.” Young adults have unique opportunities to fulfill this mandate in their spheres of influence.

Investing in young adult ministry is not just a church program—it’s a Kingdom priority. By empowering young adults at Live Oak Church, we cultivate leaders, disciples, and servants who will carry the Gospel forward for generations to come. Let us join together in prayer, encouragement, and action, ensuring that this vital ministry thrives for the glory of God! 🌿

COUNSELING CENTER

at Live Oak Church

Book a session by calling 225-664-4801,
on the Live Oak App, or on our website liveoak.church



Anna Wilkins
MA, MS, PLPC



Danielle Hatch
PLPC, CGP, NCC



Summer Renee Babin
Counseling Intern



Jason Cooper
Counseling Intern



Melissa Benton-Hebert
Counseling Intern



Alyssa Lott
Counseling Intern



Destiny Sadler
Counseling Intern

LIFELINE

SUPPORT FOR PARENTS OF ADDICTED YOUTH AND ADULTS

Parents of addicted youth and adults often feel isolated because of the stigma and shame surrounding substance abuse. However, addiction does not discriminate. Addiction affects families from all walks of life, all classes, and all communities. Lifeline is a support group where parents can gather to share resources, offer encouragement, and break the stigma. If you are a parent or loved one of a person experiencing addiction, let us be your lifeline of hope.

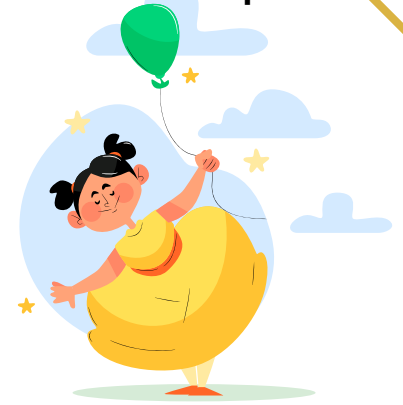
LIVE OAK CHURCH
THURSDAY, JANUARY, 17TH FROM 7-8 PM

Group Leader: Summer Babin



THE HEART BEHIND OUR KIDS' MINISTRY: A VISION FOR 2025

by Madison Cody



As we look ahead to 2025, our Kids' Ministry is more excited than ever about partnering with you—parents—as the primary spiritual leaders of your children. We know that you have the greatest influence in your child's faith journey, and our goal this year is to come alongside you in that role, offering support, resources, and opportunities to help your child grow in their relationship with God. In 2025, we're focused on creating spaces where kids can have fun, connect with the gospel in fresh ways, and build a faith that will stick with them for a lifetime.

Creating an Inviting and Welcoming Space for All

One of our biggest priorities is making sure every child who walks through our doors feels seen, heard, and loved. We want to create an environment that's not only safe and welcoming but also exciting and engaging. Our goal is for your kids to walk into a space where they feel like they belong, no matter who they are or how long they've been part of our church.

We want kids to have a blast while diving into God's Word, worshipping together, and building relationships with each other. We're also looking into providing some sensory-friendly ways to connect with children that live with special needs, making sure every child can participate and grow in their faith.

In the beginning months of 2025, we'll be taking a fresh approach to welcoming new families. We'll have new signage that will help first time visitors navigate their way to the correct place, volunteers ready to give those visitors a tour and introduce them to our ministry in a way that makes them feel at home. Whether it's their first visit or they've been with us for years, we want every child and parent to know they belong here.

Partnering with Parents as Spiritual Leaders

We have always believed that the most important place your child can grow spiritually is in your home. Our job is to support and equip you to lead your child in their faith.

This year, we're offering more practical resources to make that easier. Think family devotionals, simple ways to bring faith into everyday moments. We want to give you the tools you need to make discipleship happen at home. You're not in this alone—we're here to cheer you on and help you every step of the way.

We're also expanding opportunities for parents to connect with one another, share ideas, and build a community of support. Being a parent is tough, but doing it with a group of like-minded people can make a world of difference. Let's lean on each other as we walk this journey together!

Fun and Engaging Ways to Grasp the Gospel

In 2025, we will continue to create the exciting events that have been such a huge part of our ministry, while also offering new opportunities for kids and families to grow in their faith together. We believe that fun and meaningful experiences help kids engage with the gospel, and we're committed to providing events that do just that.

In addition to our regular events, we're excited to continue to offer more Bible study opportunities specifically for families. These studies will be a great way for parents and kids to connect and grow spiritually, strengthening family bonds while learning more about God's love and truth.

On Sundays and Wednesdays, we'll continue to teach the gospel in ways that are engaging, age-appropriate, and relevant to where kids are in their lives. Through Bible lessons, worship, and small group discussions, we're focused on making sure every child understands the good news of Jesus and how it applies to their everyday lives. Whether it's through hands-on activities, stories, or interactive lessons, we are dedicated to helping kids grow in their knowledge of the gospel and build a foundation of faith that will last.

Long-Term Impact: Building a Foundation for Life

At the heart of everything we do in 2025 is the goal of having a long-lasting spiritual impact. We aren't just looking to make Sunday mornings exciting—we want to lay a strong foundation of faith that will last throughout your child's life.

This year, we're focusing on helping kids understand their identity in Christ and teaching them how to apply biblical truths to everyday life. Our goal is for kids to walk away from our ministry feeling confident in their faith, knowing who they are in Christ, and ready to make an impact in the world around them.

Looking Ahead to 2025

We're incredibly excited about the opportunities 2025 holds for our kids and families. Our vision is clear—we want to partner with parents to raise up the next generation of leaders who are passionate about following Jesus and living out their faith in their schools, communities, and beyond.

With your partnership, we believe this year can be transformative for your child's spiritual journey. Thank you for being part of this incredible ministry. Together, let's make 2025 a year full of growth, excitement, and lasting impact for God's kingdom! 🌱



the family answer man

with Dr. Mark Crosby & Pastor David Orges

10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT PARANOIA, STRESS, AND MENTAL HEALTH

Taken from Episode 96

Planning a wedding—or dealing with any major life event—can be incredibly stressful. Stress not only impacts your physical health but can also influence your mental and spiritual well-being. The Family Answer Man tackles an important question about how stress and paranoia can affect relationships and offers helpful advice.

1. Stress Impacts Mental, Physical, and Spiritual Health

Stress magnifies weaknesses in all areas of health. It can cloud your judgment, trigger emotional overwhelm, and even lead to feelings of burnout or depression. Recognizing how stress impacts you is the first step in addressing it.

2. Weddings Are Stressful, but Perfectionism Makes It Worse

The quest for a “perfect wedding” often creates unnecessary stress. High expectations for every detail can lead to conflict and overwhelming pressure. Simplifying your plans can reduce stress for everyone involved.

3. Understanding Paranoid Personality Disorder (PPD)

Paranoia goes beyond occasional suspicious thoughts. Paranoid Personality Disorder (PPD) involves constant mistrust, suspicion, and difficulty forming attachments. It’s a mental health condition that disrupts relationships and daily life.

4. 1% of the Population Struggles with PPD

While it may seem rare, in a congregation of 1,000, there may be 10 individuals dealing with PPD. Recognizing the signs can help foster understanding and provide a path toward help.

5. What Causes Paranoia?

Paranoia often stems from:

1. **Genetics:** A family history of similar behaviors.
2. **Abusive Environments:** Cruel or controlling upbringings.
3. **Toxicity in Family Dynamics:** Constant negativity can create a mistrustful worldview.
4. **Lack of Support:** Feelings of isolation and rejection during formative years.

6. Common Traits of PPD

People with PPD often exhibit:

1. Suspicion that others are lying or trying to harm them.
2. Reluctance to trust others, even family or friends.
3. A tendency to read into hidden or non-existent threats in conversations or actions.

4. A hypersensitivity to perceived slights and a tendency to hold grudges.

7. Healthy Boundaries vs. Fear-Based Walls

Boundaries are important for emotional health, but PPD creates fear-based barriers. Individuals with PPD may keep everyone at arm’s length to avoid vulnerability, which isolates them further.

8. Paranoia Can Escalate Without Intervention

Left untreated, paranoia may worsen and even develop into more severe conditions like psychosis. Early recognition and proactive treatment are critical for managing this disorder.

9. How to Support Someone with PPD

1. **Encourage Therapy:** Group therapy or Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) can help build trust and reduce harmful thought patterns.
2. **Premarital Counseling:** For couples facing stress or conflict, regular sessions can provide tools to navigate challenges.
3. **Simplify Plans:** Scaling back on extravagant events, like weddings, can lower stress levels and minimize triggers.

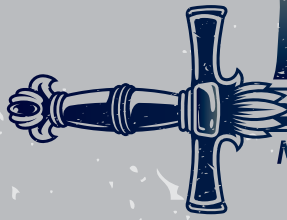
10. Spiritual Growth Provides Stability

Scripture reminds us that God gives a spirit of peace, not fear. Regular personal and group Bible studies can foster hope and encourage a sound mind. Spiritual growth, alongside professional treatment, can offer healing.

Final Encouragement

If you or someone you know is struggling with paranoia or mental health challenges, seek help from a trusted therapist, counselor, or spiritual leader. Mental and spiritual health are deeply connected, and taking proactive steps can lead to stronger, healthier relationships.

For more faith-based advice on family and relationships, tune into the Family Answer Man!



MEN'S MINISTRY

MEN HELPING MEN BE MEN

2025 MEN'S MENU

SPECIAL EVENTS

JANUARY 4 – TOP GOLF

APRIL 29 – MEN'S STEAK DINNER FELLOWSHIP

MAY 10 – CRAWFISH BOIL

JUNE 13-14 – GRIDIRON MEN'S CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 30 – MEN'S STEAK DINNER FELLOWSHIP

DISCOVERY WEEKENDS (OFF SITE) – 3 DATES AVAILABLE

ONGOING

HOME BIBLE STUDY AT ROBERT POOLE'S – MONDAYS AT 6:30 PM

DEEPER LIFE BIBLE STUDY – MONDAYS AT 6:30 PM – ROOM #201

PLAY & PRAY BASKETBALL – THURSDAYS AT 6:00 PM – FLC

REFUGE ADDICTION RECOVERY – THURSDAYS AT 7:00 PM – ROOM #201

IRON MAN'S BIBLE STUDY – FRIDAYS AT 5:30 AM

PRAYER BREAKFAST/STUDY – SECOND SAT. AT 7:30 AM

MAKING LIFE DISCIPLES

by Gideon Rossman

This past fall, a small group at Live Oak Church participated in *Making Life Disciples*, a 12 week study to help us as the Church become better equipped to offer help, hope, compassion, and discipleship to anyone considering abortion. The class ran from late August to just before Thanksgiving. We had between 7 and 15 people each session.

We used a curriculum guide developed by Care Net, a national network of over a thousand Christian, life affirming pregnancy resource centers. Each session had a video, between 10 and 40 minutes long, packed with informative and thought provoking material. After each session's video, we answered questions and talked. There were a few disagreements, some tension, and a lot of great discussion; overall, "iron sharpening iron". We discussed the topics of unplanned pregnancy and abortion from several different angles, as well as many related topics. Many of us in the group shared stories from our own lives. One point we returned to several times, is that God's forgiveness is for all sins including abortion.

The material in the curriculum guide was pretty comprehensive. It discussed not only unplanned pregnancy and abortion, but also God's

design for marriage and sexuality, good conversational approaches, crisis intervention, abortion procedures, adoption, and parenting options. Undergirding all of this material was a scriptural foundation with Jesus and His salvation as the focal point. It also maintained a healthy integration of grace and truth.

In January, a group of us are planning to tour Woman's New Life Clinic, a life affirming pregnancy help clinic in Baton Rouge.

As you are reading this, please pray for the leadership team of Helping the Most Helpless Among Us, and the group of people who just finished the Making Life Disciples class -- that God would equip us to minister to one another, to our families, to the Church, and to anyone He places in our paths. Also, please pray that God would give us good plans and opportunities for the future.

"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen." (Ephesians 3:20-21) 🌿

A DROP FROM THE ALTAR

by sam lobello

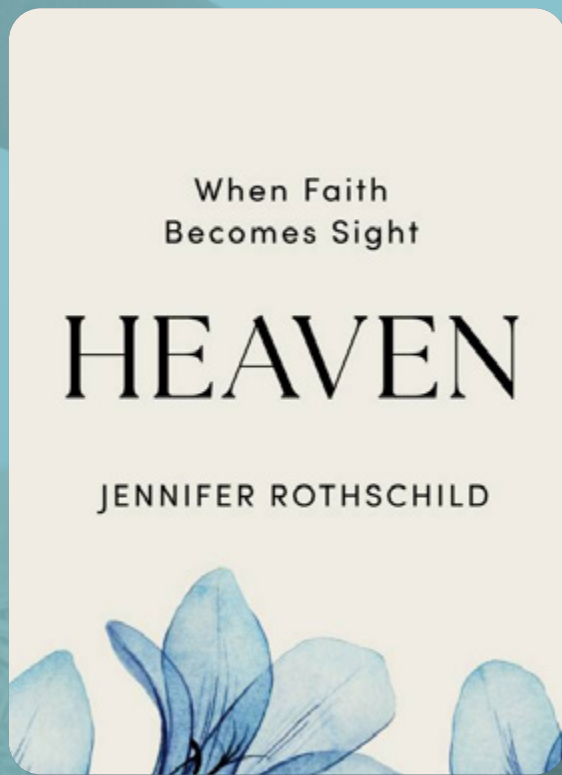
One of my seminary professors used to say to his class while teaching, "This is a drop from the altar." He was communicating to his students that what he was about to say was important and may well appear on the next test. As a result, it would be wise for us to remember it.

As I have journeyed through life God has given me "Drops from the Altar" from time to time. I have tried to remember them and apply them to my life. I will share one with you each month. I hope you find them to be helpful in your journey, as well.

"Gentleness and humility are the antidote to anxiety and aggression."

Rick Warren

GOING DEEPER?



DEEPER LIFE FOR WOMEN

HEAVEN:
*When Faith
Becomes Sight*

**Mondays
at 6:30 PM**

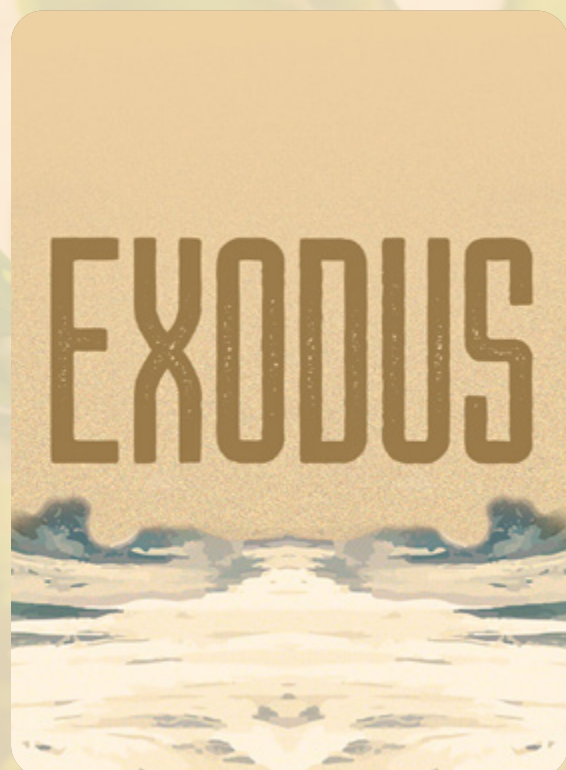
**In the Chapel.
Led by Jan Tate**

DEEPER LIFE FOR MEN

The Book of Exodus
*THE GREAT ESCAPE:
How God Delivers His
People From Bondage*

**Mondays at 6:30 PM
In Room #202.**

Led by David Tate





Building a Faith-Focused Future in Your Children

by Faith Storck

As I sit down to write this article for January's newsletter, I can't help but reflect on my dad's life—a life that was built on a foundation of unwavering faith. This week I said my final goodbye to my dad until we are reunited in heaven. But even in his passing, I feel that my dad's legacy continues to teach and inspire me, particularly in the way he instilled a strong faith in me and my siblings.

Growing up, I remember the peace and joy my father experienced knowing that his children had made the decision to follow Christ and were actively serving Him. My dad's greatest joy was not in worldly achievements, but in the spiritual well-being of his family. Even as he neared the end of his life, he continued to serve others, offering prayers for friends and loved ones who came to see him. His personal relationship with Jesus wasn't just a Sunday routine; it was the very core of who he was and how he lived.

As I reflect on my dad's example, I am reminded of the profound impact that building a faith-focused future in our children can have. It's a legacy that goes beyond words and rituals; it's about modeling a relationship with Christ that is deeply lived out in everyday moments. And as I honor my dad by sharing these thoughts, I am reminded that the way we raise our children today can have lasting effects on their spiritual journey tomorrow.

So, how can we, as parents, help build a faith-focused future for our children? Here are five

ways we can intentionally cultivate a Christ-centered environment in our homes.

1. Model a Personal Relationship with Jesus

The most powerful way to pass on faith to our children is to live it ourselves. My parents didn't just talk about their faith; they showed it through their actions. Whether it was prayer before meals, scripture reading, or a deep commitment to serving others, their daily lives reflected their love for God. Children observe far more than they're told, and when they see us living out our faith authentically, they are more likely to internalize it. Make prayer, Bible study, and worship a regular part of your life, and let your children see you prioritize your relationship with God.

2. Create a Faith-Centered Home Environment

One of the most impactful ways to nurture faith in your children is through ongoing, intentional conversations. Use everyday moments to talk about God, His love, and the principles of the Bible. For example, when challenges arise, ask your children, "How do you think God would want us to respond?" or "What does the Bible say about this situation?" These kinds of reflective questions help connect real-life experiences with biblical truths.

Another practice is to incorporate faith into

daily routines. For example, when you're driving in the car, take time to pray for others or discuss how God's love is reflected in the world around you. I remember bringing the Origes children to school one day and they all prayed on the way to school and told me it was my turn to pray. I've never been one to pray out loud with my eyes open while driving, but it was such a sweet and precious memory for me now to see how David and Summer are raising up kingdom kids doing normal daily tasks. Use could also use mealtime as a chance to talk about what you're grateful for and how God has blessed your family. You can encourage your children to talk about their faith in casual settings, whether it's at the dinner table, during bedtime, or even while doing chores together. Creating a natural rhythm of faith-centered conversations in your daily life helps your children understand that their relationship with God is not confined to certain moments—it's something that permeates everything they do.

3. Make Faith a Part of Everyday Life

Faith isn't just for Sundays; it's for every day of the week. My dad showed me that faith is about what we do with our time, talents, and resources every single day. We can teach our kids to live out their faith through acts of kindness, by serving others, and by showing compassion in their relationships. Whether it's helping a neighbor, donating to a cause,

or forgiving someone who's hurt them, these actions reinforce the idea that faith isn't just about believing—it's about doing. Help your children see how faith shapes everyday decisions and interactions.

we are shaping a future where our kids can experience the joy, peace, and purpose that come from knowing Christ.

4. Pray with and for Your Children

Prayer is an essential tool in nurturing a relationship with God. When we pray with our children, we not only model how to communicate with God, but we also create a space for them to express their hopes, fears,

and gratitude. My parents always took time to pray with me and my siblings, whether it was before bed or in times of difficulty. It made us feel supported, loved, and connected to God in a personal way. Encourage your children to pray, and let them know that God hears their prayers, no matter how big or small. Also, make it a habit to pray for your children and their future, asking God to guide and protect them.

5. Encourage Church Involvement

Regular involvement in a local church is vital for helping children develop their faith. Church isn't just a place to go once a week; it's a community where your children can grow spiritually, form relationships with others who share their faith, and discover their role in God's family. My dad was committed to being involved in his church, and he made sure that me, my siblings, and our family knew the importance of being part of a faith community. Encourage your children to get

involved in church activities, whether it's Sunday school, youth groups, or volunteering. These experiences help foster a sense of belonging and reinforce their faith.

As parents, we are not just raising children to succeed in this world; we are raising them to thrive in the Kingdom of God. By modeling a personal relationship with Jesus, creating a faith-centered environment, integrating faith into daily life, praying with and for them, and encouraging church involvement, we are investing in a future where our children will stand firm in their faith, just as my dad did.

Reflecting on my dad's life and legacy, I am grateful for the solid foundation of faith he built in me and my siblings. It is a foundation that will continue to support us for the rest of our lives. And as we pass that same legacy of faith to our children, we are shaping a future where they can experience the joy, peace, and purpose that come from knowing Christ. This, above all, is the greatest gift we can give them. 🍃



meet our team

Reach Us at info@liveoak.church



Dr. Mark Crosby
Senior Pastor



Rev. David Orges
Executive Pastor



Trish Graves
Business
Administrator



Rev. Trent Barnett
Worship Pastor



Rev. Sam LoBello
Director of Adult
Ministries



Rev. Stephen Hebert
Minister of
Pastoral Care



Rev. Nathan Lott
Young Adults &
Student Pastor



Faith Storck
Director of
Children's Ministry



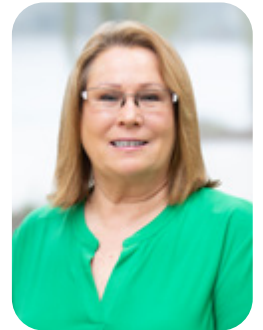
Madison Cody
Children's
Minister



Rev. Krist Norsworthy
Young Adults Pastor
& Communications



Linda Holdman
Administrative
Assistant



Kim Pamplin
Counseling Office
Manager



Jim Otken
Treasurer



Liz White
Office
Secretary

Coming together from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences, our skilled team of pastors and ministry professionals are the backbone of Live Oak Church. Their ideas and leadership help shape the direction and mission of our organization as we continue to grow.

NEW MEMBERS CLASS

STARTS ANEW THE FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH



OUR RECENT NEW MEMBERS WILL BE RECOGNIZED IN OUR WORSHIP SERVICES ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 26

THIS CLASS BEGINS THE FIRST SUNDAY MORNING EACH MONTH AT 8:45 AND ENDS ON THE FOURTH SUNDAY.

IN THESE FOUR SESSIONS YOU WILL ENCOUNTER LIFE CHANGING TRUTHS AND LEARN MORE ABOUT LIVE OAK CHURCH. YOU WILL LOOK AT SALVATION IN 3-D, LEARN TO ENHANCE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD, EXAMINE THE STAGES OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DISCOVER YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

THIS CLASS MEETS IN ROOM #102 AND RECYCLES EACH MONTH.

YOU CAN SIGN UP FOR OUR NEW MEMBERS CLASS AT THE INFORMATION DESK.

WE LOOK FORWARD WELCOMING YOU INTO OUR LIVE OAK CHURCH COMMUNITY OF FAITH!





**STATE
OF THE
CHURCH
MEETING**

**SUNDAY
JANUARY 26
AT 6:00PM
IN THE
SANCTUARY**

LIVE OAK CHURCH